

GOSS is up and running!



Jenny Poole, Head of GO Shared Services, relives her new organisation coming into being on 1 April.

Let's be honest, nobody really felt the full effect of the launch of GO Shared Services until Monday 2nd April, even though it got up and running officially on Sunday 1st (and yes, I know all the jokes about choosing that particular launch date.)

More seriously, it's been hectic since the launch but I am pleased to report that things are going pretty well so far, despite the brief power outage a couple of weeks ago. We have established the GOSS management team, and transferred staff across to Cotswold DC in line with TUPE, while ensuring they also got paid on time! Also, the implementation of the Enterprise

Resource Planning (ERP) system is continuing at nearly all the partner and client locations (with the exception of Cotswold DC which goes live in August.) This is a great achievement bearing in mind that the HR process lead was indisposed (and many thanks are due to Chris Cox and others in the Programme Office for stepping into the breach to get the HR data loaded on time.)

As I write, GOSS is successfully generating debtors invoices, placing orders, and paying staff and creditors. This is gratifying to say the least, and I am very grateful to everyone who has played a part in helping us get to this place, especially the HR and Payroll teams.

We are now in the final stages of the GO Programme. The last meeting of the Programme Board took place on 2 May and remaining activities are focusing on lessons learned ahead of the Cotswold DC implementation, and handing over

responsibility for the ERP system to the ICT Support and Hosting Centre of Excellence in Cheltenham.

The launch of GOSS paved the way for some new governance arrangements to come into effect. From now on, a newly-formed Client Officer Group (COG) will govern GOSS (see page 2 for members).

Strategically, a Joint Monitoring and Liaison Group (JMLG), including relevant Portfolio Holders from partner councils, will oversee our work.

One of our first big challenges is to shape the future structure of GOSS. We will soon be convening workshops for staff in the shared service to discuss ideas about how we want to be organised and accommodated from October 2012 onwards (details on Page 2).

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in establishing GOSS. It's been a long time coming but it's been well worth the journey.

Achievements

March 2011

Hardware purchased and installed to prepare for installation of Enterprise Resource Planning system.

April 2011

Solution Design for ERP system signed off. Work on building system began. GO website went live.

June-July 2011

Cabinets / Councils agreed Shared Service arrangements - Employing Authority is Cotswold.

September 2011

Business Continuity Testing successfully completed

October - December 2011

User Acceptance Testing (Forest of Dean and West Oxfordshire Councils)

December 2011

Forest of Dean went live.

December 2011 - March 2012

TUPE consultation.

February 2012

User Acceptance Testing (Cheltenham and West Oxfordshire Councils, Cheltenham Borough Homes and Ubico)

April 2012

TUPE transfers completed to enable Shared Services to operate.

Cheltenham and West Oxfordshire Councils, Cheltenham Borough Homes and Ubico go live

Milestones

June 2012

User Acceptance Testing (Cotswold Council)

August 2012

Cotswold goes live.

October 2012

Savings begin to be delivered.

Every New Beginning Comes From Some Other Beginning's End

So said a Roman philosopher in the mid 1st century AD, and it's as true today as it was back then.

It's an appropriate quote, I think, for where we find ourselves today with the GO Programme whose final meeting was held on 2 May 2012. Following the creation of GO Shared Services from 1 April 2012, the closedown of the programme hails the new beginning of the governance arrangements for GOSS. GOSS management team will take forward the final implementation of Agresso at Cotswold in August.

Through these newsletters, we have hopefully kept you informed of progress with the GO programme; sometimes traumatic, frustrating and scary but also ground breaking and still quite unique in local government shared service terms.

Through the creation of GOSS and implementation of ABW we have achieved something quite remarkable, thanks to a truly outstanding team effort across all the partner organisations. I can honestly say that I have never witnessed such dedication, commitment and effort from so many people and I want to put on record, for the final time as your sponsor, my thanks to all those involved in making GO a success. In particular, I would like to thank GO Programme Manager, Rob Wood (pictured) for the role that he has played in getting Agresso and GOSS launched. When Rob joined the programme he told us that the go-live was very likely to be a "bumpy ride" and how right he was. However, through his leadership and with the sheer hard work of many of you we have overcome numerous snags and more serious problems to find ourselves at the start of a new beginning.



May I wish you all the best for the future and for the success of GOSS.

Pat Pratley
GO Programme Sponsor

So far so good - now let's get into better shape!

Members of the GOSS Senior Management Team (pictured below) have organised some externally-facilitated workshops across all partner authorities in May to discuss ideas about how the service could be structured in the future. This will include consideration of accommodation requirements and the services, maximising the additional capacity and resilience benefits which we can deliver by operating as a shared service. It is hoped that all GOSS staff will attend. Details are as follows:

- 21 May - Forest of Dean District Council (2 - 5 pm);
- 22 May - Cotswold District Council (9 - 12 am) ;
- 22 May - Cheltenham Borough Council (2 - 5 pm); and
- 23 May - West Oxfordshire District Council (9 - 12 am)

There will also be a 7 June session (9.30 am—12.30 pm) at Cotswold for anyone who missed out on the May workshops.



Formal consultation on the accommodation and restructuring starts in July until the end of August. We plan to implement the changes in October. Consultation will include Cotswold DC union and non-union staff representatives, the Client Officer Group and the Joint Management Liaison Group.

For further details contact any member of the Senior Management Team

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GO Questions and Answers

Q. Who will be the members of the new Client Officer Group (COG) which will govern GOSS?

A. Jenny Poole (Head of GOSS), Frank Wilson (Cotswold DC /W Oxfordshire DC). Derek Broom (Forest of Dean DC), Mark Sheldon (Cheltenham BC), Paul Woolcock (Head of GO's ICT Support and Hosting Centre of Excellence), Bob Dagger (Cheltenham Borough Homes Ltd), and Rob Bell (Ubico Ltd.)

