

South Derbyshire partnership to create stronger public services and growing economy

Submitted by: Fellows Associates

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It is announced today that South Derbyshire District Council has selected Northgate Public Services as its preferred bidder in a ground-breaking partnership programme designed to create stability and improvement in local services and boost jobs in the area.

The innovative risk-reward agreement, the first of its kind in the country, brings together a guaranteed package of service improvement, skills enhancement and jobs creation while delivering cashable savings to the Council through improved business processes. In total, it is anticipated that over 100 jobs will be brought into the district, with additional jobs created over future years.

Under a seven year contract worth £22 million, set to start on August 1st 2010, Northgate will take on direct responsibility for managing and improving the Council's Corporate Services - Finance, Organisational Development, IT and Business Improvement, Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services. It will also develop a regional centre of excellence - a market-facing business – to support regional growth and develop employment opportunities across South Derbyshire.

Under Northgate's leadership, citizen services will be transformed with better access and greater personalisation. Employees will have their jobs protected. They will benefit from improved investment and support as their skills and capabilities are developed to meet changing demand.

The regional Business Centre - to be set up in Swadlincote - will provide much-needed business services for the private and public sector across the East Midlands. It forms an integral part of a national network of regional centres currently being set up by Northgate.

The centres are aimed at providing public and private bodies with new opportunities to radically overhaul business processes, improve services, and generate cost efficiencies through economies of scale and shared resources.

The partnership will guarantee continued investment in services to secure further improvements and savings through the lifetime of the contract.

A total investment of £1.9 million has been pledged to upgrade IT systems and services. Northgate is also guaranteeing cashable savings to the council of more than £2 million pounds, inclusive of fees, over the lifetime of the project.

John Harrison, the Acting Leader for South Derbyshire District Council, said: "South Derbyshire is a great place to live and work. It is one of the fastest, if not the fastest, growing districts in the East Midlands. We aim to keep it that way. We are committed to providing value for money for our community and this contract will enable us to save money while continuing to improve services.

"Northgate is a partner that we trust. It shares our high ambition for the future. We have a genuine commitment to one another and to making this partnership a success. We are confident that Northgate's

expertise in this area of work will allow us to deliver high quality, efficient services while creating job opportunities and enhanced skills. This really is a win-win situation for all concerned. Working together will improve services for our residents, while realising much needed savings."

Dave Meaden, Chief Executive of Northgate Public Services, said: "In these hard economic times councils must not only deliver stronger public services, they have to lead their communities back to economic growth. Our innovative approach is based on combining people development with process development to create better public services outcomes and wider improvements to South Derbyshire."

"We are delighted to have been selected as preferred bidder. This is an exciting opportunity to build upon our transformation experience - to deliver the twin package of local service improvement and economic growth. We aim to deliver better for less while maintaining investment in services to create new opportunities for local people. We look forward to working with the Council and our new employees to ensure that the local community as a whole truly benefits from this partnership."

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For further information

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Notes to editors:

1. At the heart of England and the National Forest, South Derbyshire is one of, if not the fastest growing district in the East Midlands. Offering the blend of a growing economy, attractive countryside and numerous places for leisure and tourism, the District can truly provide an excellent place to live and work.
2. The tendering process for the provision of Corporate Services began in October 2008. Each bidder was told that the key objectives were to ensure medium and long term stability, improve access to a wide range of skills, retain and grow additional jobs in South Derbyshire, protect the interests of both the current and future workforce, deliver cashable savings and invest in continued business improvements.
3. Northgate Public Services is an innovative provider of transformation and improvement services to the public sector. It is committed to high quality public services that place individuals and their communities at their heart. Its knowledge and understanding of people's needs are core to its business, as too, is its depth and breadth across public services.
4. Northgate's task is to enhance public value through the intelligent use of people and technology; to understand why and what change is necessary; to provide new thinking leading to improved performance; and

to link company rewards with positive outcomes for the communities for whom it works. It supports transformation through sustainable performance partnerships.

5. In the UK, Northgate works with ninety five per cent of local authorities, every police force, and a large number of health organisations, housing associations, utilities and transport companies. Founded in 1969, the company has over 8,000 employees.