

OPTIONS REVIEW CORPORATE SERVICES AND OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE AND CLERICAL SUPPORT

1. Reason for Report

To report to Committee the proposed efficiency savings and planned shared services approach within Corporate Services and the Office of the Chief Executive following the outcome of an Options Review and to obtain agreement for a new post to be funded from within existing resources.

2. Report Summary

2.1 The remit of the exercise was to assess the continuing need for services, to streamline parts of the service and provide alternative methods of resourcing and delivering services but on a phased basis.

2.2 The Review covers Corporate Services Units: Directorate Support, Human Resources (118 English Street), Communications Unit, Policy and Performance Unit, Committee and Members Services and the Office of the Chief Executive Executive Unit

2.3 A Review team was set up to look at the current and proposed future structures

2.4 The Review recommendations are consistent with the Scottish Executive's shared services and efficient government agendas and contributes to the Council's business transformation component contained within the Financial Efficiency Strategy. They are also consistent with work ongoing in an inter service pilot of administrative and clerical support services.

2.5 The implementation of the Review findings should be undertaken in a two stage process with some immediate changes to the location of posts and further work to take place as soon as possible to secure an integrated shared strategy and to take account of other related changes.

2.6 The Review has identified the need for a new Business Manager post, which will require to be filled from existing resources, to develop and manage an integrated administrative and clerical support service.

3. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to:

3.1 endorse the Phase 1 changes made to 7 posts in order to achieve £45,535 efficiency savings and which also address future pressures within Corporate Services and Office of the Chief Executive;

3.2 agree the creation of a new Business Manager post to be filled from within existing resources and with specific responsibility to develop an integrated administrative and clerical support service; and

3.3 note the ongoing work between Corporate Services, Financial Services and Office of the Chief Executive to secure further efficiencies and co-ordination across central support services.

4. Corporate Plan Links and Contribution

The Corporate Plan contains within it a commitment to put in place thorough reviews that examine how we deliver improved, modern services.

The Human Resource Strategy has an underpinning principle of co-ordination – a one Council approach which recognises that more is achieved by working together across services.

5. Resources/Value for Money Assessment

5.1 The cost to the Council to produce this review report has been minimal.

5.2 The outcome of the Review provides for the best allocation of administrative and clerical resource to meet current and future needs within the services involved at no additional cost.

6. Risk Assessment

A risk assessment exercise was undertaken as part of the review and those identified in terms of the independence and validity of the Review Team and its findings have been managed through consultation on the draft report and discussion with staff.

7. Authorities and Legal Implications

7.1 The Asset Management Committee has delegated responsibility to consider staffing matters and approve new posts.

7.2 All employment rights have been respected during the review process.

8. Consultation

The Corporate Services Senior Management Team initiated the Review and have been closely involved at all stages. The Corporate Services Management Team, the Review team, the Business Review Manager, administrative and clerical staff involved have been consulted and comments have been incorporated in the report.

9. Background

9.1 The Asset Management Committee at its meeting on 3 July 2006 noted the Corporate Services outstanding savings target of £455,100 for 2006/07, and agreed to undertake Options Reviews of Human Resources, Legal Services, Property Services, Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, and **Directorate Support**. In parallel with this, discussions were ongoing about the potential for integrated administrative and clerical support arrangements and the need for refocusing responsibilities to meet the needs of different Units within the Council Offices Headquarters, and 118 English Street. Discussions are also ongoing about

achieving closer integration between Financial Services, Corporate Services and the Office of the Chief Executive as the three central Directorates.

9.2 To take forward the Review a Review team was established, led by the Pensions Manager, Human Resources, and involving representatives of each of the services with administrative and clerical support in the main Council Offices and 118 English Street (Human Resources, Executive Unit, Corporate Services Directorate Support, Communications, Committee and Members Services, Policy and Performance).

9.3 The team have both met as a group and individually and discussed the current and possible future structures and identified where efficiencies can be made.

9.4 The Asset Management Committee at its meeting on 15 November 2006 agreed savings of £156,000 from Corporate Services to be progressed to support the Council's 2007/08 Financial Efficiency Strategy, including savings of £29,600 from Directorate and Support in 2007/08.

10. Key Issues for Change

10.1 Current resources available and identification of future needs

10.1.1 The Review Team identified all the existing clerical and administrative resources and current duties.

10.1.2 With regard to future needs, all services have been working on their Strategic and Operational Plans to determine their objectives for the period 2007-10 and the level of resources necessary to achieve their requirements.

10.2 In assessing the current allocation of resource and future pressures, including the requirement for savings, the Review Team identified that some changes to the arrangements were indeed required.

10.3 The Review then focussed on achieving efficiency savings and addressing pressures through a two-phase approach. Phase one would involve the re-deployment of some individual members of staff into vacant posts in other Units and addressed any critical areas of work pressure in the short term. Phase two would involve a transition, over a period of time, to a single integrated structure where administrative and clerical support is provided on a shared basis to a range of services in the main Council Offices, 118 English Street, Dumfries and also possibly Civil Contingencies.

10.4 The current position and the phase one proposals for administrative and clerical support are outlined in **Appendix 1**. Overall the proposals see changes amounting to a saving of £45,535 for 2007/8 onwards through the deletion of 2.5 clerical posts.

10.5 Other posts

10.5.1 In addition to these clerical and administrative changes it is proposed that the Senior Information Officer (Freedom of Information) will transfer from Communications Unit into Committee and Member Services. This is also a recommendation from the Communications Unit Options Review undertaken mid 2006.

10.5.2 The early retirement of the Development Co-ordinator in Directorate Support was approved by Asset Management Committee on 15 November 2006 and will secure annual savings of £39851 after 3 years. The duties associated with this post are presently being shared by a number of staff in the Directorate. Certain of these responsibilities are however best provided within Directorate Support and could be effectively combined with responsibility for developing, and subsequently managing, the integrated administrative and clerical support service identified as desirable by the Review. (Phase 2 of the implementation). The intention would be that the creation of a Business Manager post would be responsible for carrying out these duties. An outline of the duties is attached as **Appendix 2**. The post would be filled from within existing resources. The job description and grade for the post has yet to be determined and will be subject to normal job evaluation criteria.

10.5.3 Any other changes to administrative and clerical posts arising from the implementation of Phase 2 would be accommodated within existing financial and/or staffing resources in central support services.

11. Future related work

11.1 A full and further staffing review of Committee and Members Services will take place mid – 2007 as agreed at Business Review and Performance Committee on 25 January 2007.

11.2 The requirements of the Civil Contingency Unit and the impact of the relocation of the Community Planning Unit into Office of the Chief Executive can also be taken into consideration as part of Phase 2.

11.3 The new Human Resources/Payroll system could impact on the role of the Staffing Officer in the future. The Staffing Officer is based within Directorate Support and provides assistance for Corporate Services and Office of the Chief Executive.

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APPENDICES - 2

APPENDIX 1

	Existing clerical and administrative posts	Current Vacancies	Current temporary Posts	Major Issues for 2007	Proposed Changes
Directorate Support (Council Offices only)	10	0	0	HR/Payroll System implementation and Single Status. Maintenance of Business Transformation monitor	Deletion of a part time clerical assistant post due to spare capacity and moved to a vacant post filled by a temporary member of staff in Committee and Member Services. Partial transfer of administrative assistant support to the Senior Information Officer in Committee and Member Services on a temporary basis
Communications Unit (Council Offices only)	1	1	0	Maintains FOI database, CIS and Webmaster inbox, facilitate organisation of agricultural shows, administrative support to inter-service groups (Communications Group; Sponsorship Strategy working group)	Transfer Senior Information Officer to Corporate Support and Governance and redeploy clerical assistant from Human Resources to the Communications Unit

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Human Resources (118 English Street)	11	0	2	Single Status/Equal Pay/ Health and Safety, Pension changes	Equivalent savings of two clerical assistants. Redeployment to an administrative assistant vacancy following a successful secondment (Single Status) permanent. Redeployment into Communications Unit on a temporary basis. Deletion of two posts (note: this may involve changing the nature of the reception service)
Policy and Performance Unit (Council Offices only)	7	1	3	Continuing secondment of administrative assistant for Performance Management. Audit of Best Value and Community Planning (Dumfries and Galloway Audit Submission)	No changes at this time

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Committee and Member Services	10	0	1	Elections May 2007, multi member wards, New Committee handbook to reflect new Committee structures and scheme of administration and delegation and Member induction, training and supporting information, Community Councils, Code of Conduct and scheme revisals, Children's Panel and Children's Panel Advisory Committee the impact of 'Getting it Right for Every Child', Governance Assurance for Annual Accounts	Filling of a vacant clerical assistant post (children's Panel) on a temporary basis and at a full time capacity through redeployment from Directorate Support. Senior Information Officer transferring from Communications Unit to Committee and Member Service with partial administrative support from an administrative assistant within Directorate and Support.
Executive Unit and Emergency Planning	6	2	0	Civil Contingencies Act, Business Continuity and Risk Management. Election work	

Delete 2.5 clerical posts – total savings £45,535

APPENDIX 2

Outline duties of Business Manager

Support Corporate Services Management Team meetings (agendas and minutes)

Support Corporate Services Senior Management Team meetings (agendas and minutes)

Support service planning process specifically Strategic Plans

Support performance management including reporting to Committee

Support financial monitoring

Develop and manage an integrated administrative and clerical support service for the Council Offices building

Lead Tenant for the Council Offices

Administer the DGC Consultancy Database and report to the appropriate Committees

Co-ordinates Corporate Services action on Business Continuity, Health and Safety, etc.

Administer Corporate Services Briefcase website