

CULTURAL SERVICES – SAVINGS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

1. Reason for Report

To advise Members of the Implementation Plan for a proposed budget saving in relation to clerical and administrative staffing within Cultural Services as requested by Members at the January ECS Committee.

2. Report Summary

This report outlines the background to the proposed budget saving and gives information in relation to how the saving will be implemented.

3. Glossary of Terms

ECS Education and Community Services Committee

ERDF European Regional Development Fund

FES Financial Efficiency Strategy

LIA Libraries, Information and Archives

4 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

4.1 note the background to the proposed saving;

4.2 agree the implementation plan outlined within the report; and

4.3 note that the level of saving achieved during 2008-09 will be dependant on the level of turnover of staff within Cultural Services and will be reported to a future committee.

5. Corporate Plan Links and Contribution

The report contributes to the Council's Financial Efficiency Strategy [FES] and helps deliver Council services in a more effective and efficient way using best value principles.

6. Resources/Value for Money Assessment

Potential savings were identified following the creation of Cultural Services in 2003 and were further examined as part of the work on the 2007 Options Review and as a result of subsequent Council decisions in relation to budget savings for the financial year 2008-09. The report addresses how services could be more efficiently delivered within existing budgets.

7. Risk Assessment

The review of clerical and administrative functions within Cultural Services was risk assessed as part of the options review process with the proposed savings being further risk assessed as proposed budget savings. The results were: that the proposal and the saving had a low impact on service users; a medium impact on staff; and no impact on policy, Council reputation or other Council services. By reviewing posts within the parameters of normal staff turnover the impact on existing staff was minimised.

8. Consultations

The Acting Director of Finance and the Service Managers within Cultural Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report. With one exception, Service Managers within Cultural Services agree with the terms of the report. The issue regarding the exception is being dealt with under separate procedures.

9. Background

9.1 At the meeting of the ECS Committee held on 29 January 2008 Members agreed as a budget saving: Priority 23 – Rationalise administrative/clerical staffing within Cultural Services (**Appendix 1**). This saving has been agreed in principle by the Finance Sub Committee based on risk and impact assessments undertaken by the Corporate Management Team and by the Community Services Management Team, subject to a proposed implementation plan for the savings of £24k to be presented to the February meeting.

9.2 Cultural Services was established as a result of the 2003 restructuring of the Council. It forms part of the Community Services Group of the Education, Social Work and Community Services Directorate and brings together:

- Arts
- Libraries, Information and Archives
- Museums, and
- Registration Services

9.3 Through 64 outlets, Cultural Services provides a diverse range of services to the people of Dumfries and Galloway. These services range from registrations of births, distribution of books for babies, rhyme and storytimes for toddlers, project kits for primary pupils, and children's activity clubs at one end of the spectrum; to film screenings, heritage and art exhibitions, on-line information services, assistance with family history research and registration of deaths at the other. Cultural Services also support third sector organisations in the areas of arts, heritage and museums. As an example, Dumfries and Galloway Arts Association leads arts development in four distinct art form areas on behalf of the Council through Cultural Services – public art, community art, literature and performing arts.

9.4 Although each service has elements of uniqueness in terms of the services it provides and the facilities it offers; there are, at the same time, areas of commonality to be exploited for the benefit of all. As an example, Registration is a primary source of information for family history research. The Registrar General for Scotland has indicated that this is an area of service and a resource, which he would like to see expanded, exploited and better used. This fits well with Libraries, Information and Archives and with Museums in terms of family history research, the general interest in everything connected with local history, and with local studies and heritage.

9.5 Perhaps the strongest link between the services lies in the strength of commitment to customer service and customer care. Cultural Services enjoys over two million user visits each year and is, by far, the largest 'by choice' interface that the Council has with the public it serves. This commitment to the highest standards of public service has been further demonstrated during 2007 by the third-time award of Charter Mark status to Libraries, Information and Archives and also by VisitScotland Visitor Attraction gradings to Arts and Museums facilities. Customer service and customer care together with the external validation of the services we offer will continue to be high priorities with Cultural Services.

9.6 The 2007-08 revenue budget for Cultural Services breaks down as follows:

	% of Gross	Gross Exp.	Income
Arts	13%	£ 826,220	£ 245,876
Libraries, Information and Archives	53%	£3,348,822	£ 379,658
Museums	19%	£1,177,060	£ 132,584
Registration Services	14%	£ 886,574	£ 955,719
Strategic	1%	£ 81,985	£ 0
Cultural Services - total	100%	£6,320,661	£1,713,837

9.7 Cultural Services currently has 290 established posts which equates to 164.56 full time equivalents. The breakdown of posts is as follows:

Section	Full time posts	Part time posts	FTE
Arts	8	9	12.34
Libraries, Information and Archives	43	136	88.55
Museums	21	27	38.36
Registration Services	20	20	23.31
Cultural Services – strategic	2	0	2
Totals	95	195	164.56

9.8 Within these totals clerical and administrative posts are as follows:

Section	Full time posts	Part time posts	FTE
Arts	2	1*	2.8*
Libraries, Information and Archives	1	3	2.67
Museums	4	0	4
Registration Services	1	0	1
Cultural Services - strategic	1	0	1
Totals	9	4	11.47

*1 post project based

The individual administrative and clerical posts within Cultural Services together with details of the base for each post are listed within **Appendix 2**.

10 Review of Administrative and Clerical Staffing

10.1 Shortly after the creation of Cultural Services in 2003 it became obvious that there existed a degree of duplication amongst the clerical and administrative functions within the individual sections in that, for example, invoice processing was being carried out in ten locations when the work could as easily, and more efficiently, be carried out in one location.

10.2 During the review it became clear that there was a distinct difference to be drawn between posts that provided a face-to-face service to the public, for example, the clerical post at Gretna Registration Office and posts which were essentially engaged in back-office processes or functions. Some posts, for example museums posts in Kirkcudbright or Stranraer, carried out a mix of both types of work. One of the guiding principles within the review was to ensure that services were provided in the most appropriate location for the work involved.

10.3 As has been made clear at para 9.4 above, one of the key objectives of Cultural Services is to provide the highest possible levels of service and commitment to our customers. One way to deliver better services to the public within the limitations imposed by the Financial Efficiency Strategy is to be as efficient as possible with back-office processes and functions and thus release staff effort and time to provide face-to-face public service. As an example, LIA has operated on this principle for over thirty years and has one small administrative unit [2.67fte] to provide the support for 29 locally based libraries including mobile libraries.

10.4 To illustrate the potential economies two areas of back-office work were looked at in-depth, invoice processing and the work associated with staff turnover. The following table gives the numbers of invoices processed during the 2006-07 financial year and the number of staff vacancies which were processed during the same period within each section. It is recognised that existing clerical and administrative posts include many other duties such as telephone answering, mailing, general enquiries, filing, recording of sick leave and annual leave, petty cash etc etc.

Section	Invoices processed	Staff vacs. processed	Clerical/Admin Staff
Arts	1482	4	2.8
Libraries, Information and Archives*	2382	28	2.67
Museums	1109	16	4
Registration Services	159**	3	1
Cultural Services – strategic*	*	*	1
Totals	4,973	51	11.47

* posts are co-located and share work load

**processed by Corporate Finance

10.5 Using the information collated it was calculated that the work of 11.47fte staff could be handled by 9.47fte. This calculation recognised that the Gretna Registration Office post would remain at Gretna, that the Project Assistant within the Arts Team was integral to the work of the Arts and Crafts Trade Development Project; and that the Museums posts based at Kirkcudbright and Stranraer would remain in these locations in the first instance but that any reduction in back-office processes would result in the staff hours released being used to improve public service in these locations. It was also recognised that staff hours released might also result in a lesser requirement for seasonal staff which would translate into a budget saving. The opportunity of natural turnover in staffing amongst the 11.47fte administrative and clerical staff would allow the reassessment of the staffing requirement.

10.6 The resignation of the Museum Assistant Administration based at Dumfries Museum during August 2007 offered the first opportunity to explore the implications of how the duties of a post could be covered to produce a level of saving within the replacement process. In terms of identified staffing duties it was arranged that the Administrative Assistant Cultural Services would assume administrative responsibility for the paperwork for all Cultural Services staffing vacancies. The Staffing Officer for ESWCS agreed that the central staffing section would process all Museums manual posts which effectively removed a large part of the identified duties of the post and brought Museums into line with the other sections of Cultural Services. Batch processing of invoices for all Museums would be carried out under the supervision and control of the Administrative Assistant Cultural Services.

10.7 The Cultural Services Manager Museums was requested to identify the elements of work which remained with a view to those either being transferred within Cultural Services or, alternatively, an existing post from elsewhere within Cultural Services would be transferred for a set number of hours each week to undertake the work. The Clerical Assistant based in Dumfries Museum was to be, and continues to be, fully supported by the Administrative Assistant Cultural Services.

10.8 Whilst the non-replacement of the post would result in a full-year saving of £23,800 including on-costs during 2008-09, it is important to note that this post has not been deleted from the establishment. The vacant post will remain within the resources available to provide flexible clerical/admin support across Cultural Services. Any further staff turnover amongst Cultural Services clerical/admin staff during the financial year will provide further opportunities to fine tune the provision of efficient clerical/admin services which are responsive to local need.

10.9 The temporary post of Project Assistant within the Arts Team has become vacant as a result of the current post holder being promoted to the permanent post of Visual

Arts Development Officer. The ERDF Arts and Crafts Trade Development Project is due to finish on 31 March 2008 and it has been agreed that the Project Assistant post need not be filled for the last two months. There will be a resultant project cost saving during 2007-08 of £2,000 which will be split 50/50 between the Cultural Services and a loss of European grant funding which results in a budget saving of £1,000 to the Council.

10.10 In pursuit of Council policy and good management practice all staff movements will continue to be closely monitored with a view to effecting changes in work practices and processes as opportunities allow. The proposals outlined in this report will allow more efficient delivery of back-office services whilst also making possible more effective front-line service together with budget savings. The level of saving is dependant on the level of turnover amongst Cultural Services clerical and administrative staff.

<p>Alastair Johnston Operations Manager Cultural Services</p> <p>Date of Report: 19 February 2008</p> <p>File Ref: G/CultSer/ComRep08CultSerAdmin/ARJ</p>	<p>Stewart Atkinson Group Manager Community Services Education, Social Work and Community Services Woodbank, 30 Edinburgh Road DUMFRIES, DG1 1NW</p>
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APPENDICES – 2

Background Papers:

1. Report dated 23 January 2008 by the Group Manager Community Services to Education and Community Services Committee on 29 January 2008, "Community Services Budget Savings Proposals 2008-09"
2. Report dated 10 January 2008 by Director of Finance to Finance Sub Committee on 17 January 2008, Item 5, "Budget Savings Package 2008-09"

APPENDIX 1

Priority 23 - Rationalise administration/clerical staffing within Cultural Services

1.	<p>Directorate: Education, Social Work and Community Services</p> <p>Service Area: Community Services - Cultural Services</p> <hr/> <p>Responsible Officer: Stewart Atkinson, Group Manager Community Services</p> <hr/>
2.	<p>Proposed Saving for 08/09: £24k</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is this amount for full or part year? Full year saving. ● If the savings are ongoing for future years, detail amounts: £24k <p>Will this saving affect external or ring fenced funding? No.</p>
3.	<p>Detailed information on proposal for saving or income generation. Rationalisation of administration and clerical staffing within Cultural Service</p> <p>Savings achieved by integrating clerical and administrative processes within the four business units of Cultural Services.</p>
4.	<p>Will the proposal require a reduction in staffing levels? Yes - 2 FTE (one already in place)</p> <p>Proposed Measures to achieve savings against "Vacancy Savings" -</p> <p>Please detail the number, classification by job title of the posts affected. Where possible identify the <u>actual posts</u> affected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10/700 Museum Assistant Administration [vacant AP2 1fte] 10/703 Clerical Assistant [occupied GS1/2 1fte] 10/741 Clerical Assistant [occupied GS1/2 1fte] 10/697 Museum Assistant [occupied GS2/3 1fte] 10/688 Administration Assistant [occupied AP2/3 1 fte] 10/689 Clerical Assistant [occupied GS1/2 1 fte] 10/718 Administration Assistant [occupied AP2/3 1 fte] 10/643 Senior Clerical Assistant [occupied GS2/3 1fte] 10/711 Senior Clerical Assistant [occupied GS2/3 0.71fte] 10/732 Senior Clerical Assistant [occupied GS2/3 0.5 fte] 10/644 Senior Clerical Assistant [occupied GS2/3 0.46 fte] <p>Note: The remaining 1FTE post will be identified from the range of</p>

	<p>posts detailed above.</p> <p>Please comment on how the reduction will be effected...will the reduction be through natural wastage, voluntary redundancy or compulsory redundancy? Existing vacancies and opportunities for such as early retirement/voluntary redundancy.</p> <p>Have unions been involved in any discussions? No</p>
5.	<p>Will the proposal affect current assets? e.g. change in building use Minor changes only</p>
6.	<p>When will the proposal be implemented? Currently being implemented as vacancies arise and tasks are transferred</p>
7.	<p>Have Members been involved in any discussions? No</p>
8.	<p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>If this savings proposal is implemented, what are the consequences within the following risk scenarios?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • impact on the service user: low. It is not considered that there will be anything other than, at best, negligible impact on service delivery. • impact on staff: medium. It is however considered that there will require to be further discussion with a limited number of staff who consider this to be a backward step in terms of maintaining existing operational levels. • impact on other Council services: nil • impact on policy: nil • impact on Council's reputation: nil

APPENDIX 2

CULTURAL SERVICES
Administrative and Clerical Posts

Post Ref	Post Title	Post Base	Hours	Status
Posts considered as part of Savings Option 23 -				
10/643	Senior Clerical Assistant	Ewart Library Dumfries	35	Occ
10/644	Senior Clerical Assistant	Ewart Library Dumfries	16	Occ
10/688	Administrative Assistant	Gracefield Dumfries	35	Occ
10/689	Clerical Assistant	Gracefield Dumfries	35	Occ
10/700	Museums Assistant Administration	Dumfries Museum	35	Vac
10/703	Clerical Assistant	Dumfries Museum	35	Occ
10/697	Museums Assistant	Stranraer Museum	35	Occ
10/711	Senior Clerical Assistant	Ewart Library Dumfries	25	Occ
10/718	Administrative Assistant	CS Support Dumfries	35	Occ
10/732	Senior Clerical Assistant	Ewart Library Dumfries	17.5	Occ
10/741	Clerical Assistant	Stewartry Museum	35	Occ
Posts not included within Savings Option 23* -				
2/68	Clerical Assistant	Gretna Registration	35	Occ
10/715	Project Assistant	Gracefield Dumfries	21	Vac

*see para 10.5 of the main report

Occ = Post occupied Vac = Post vacant