**Redesign Board Workshop 15.8.17**

**New reviews proposed**

**Reviews considered or suggested at the Board Workshop on 27.6.17**

At the Board Workshop in June 2017 Members reviewed the outstanding areas identified previously for peer review. They agreed to proceed with 2, find out more about 2 before proceeding and not to proceed at this time with 5 (because other approaches to review were in place or needed or because the time was not right for review).

Further information is now available for the 2 areas Members wanted to consider before proceeding. This is detailed below along with recommendations on how to proceed.

1. **Procured legal services** – in discussion with the Head of Service (HoS), it is confirmed that in 2016/17 we procured a range of legal services at a cost of £1.78m. He has identified up to £0.5m of that work which could be undertaken in-house and he believes provided at less cost if the in-house team’s capacity could be increased. To explore this and other potential opportunities it is proposed that **this review proceeds as a peer review** with a team appointed with Members and Trade Union representatives attached.
2. **Regulated property maintenance** – discussions are underway on potential re-structuring of the property function within the Council. These may feature in the report to Council in September 2017. It is proposed that **peer review consideration is deferred** until there is clarity on structure change and any review activity that may be instigated by that.

**Other areas identified by Members for review**

Members also identified other areas they felt needed some form of review. These are listed below along with proposals for how to proceed.

1. **Tourism potential** – given the tourism role of other bodies and the Highland Tourism Partnership a review of the Council’s function alone is likely to be too narrow and a partnership approach seems more appropriate. The Commercial Board may also have an interest e.g. Cllr Henderson has suggested that the Council’s Service Point Network could offer a booking service for tourists for a fee. It is proposed that **instead of a peer review** that the scope for the Council in developing further tourism potential is initially **referred to the Places Committee Policy Development Group** which would enable partners to contribute.
2. **Car parking** – work was done last year to quantify potential income from new and increased parking charges. This could benefit from a peer review process which would also involve Members and, following the discussion at Council in June, to consider how some of this income could be re-invested locally to support other services and as part of the work to be done on developing community budgets. It is proposed that **this review proceeds as a peer review** with a team appointed with Members and Trade Union representatives attached.
3. **New build programme and how we build** – **before considering a peer review** it is proposed that the Chair of the Redesign Board **discusses the issues and ideas** raised with Cllr Maxine Smith and involve relevant staff (e.g. Head of Development and Regeneration). This may help identify what kind of review activity is best.
4. **Legal services by-laws and traffic orders** – **before considering a peer review** is it proposed that there is **further discussion** with Cllr MacLean and the Head of Policy and Reform to understand the issues she raised. It may be that a Lean review would be more useful.
5. **Other HR functions and Sickness absence in education** – **before considering a peer review** is it proposed that there is **further discussion** with Cllr Currie to understand the issues she raised and with the Head of People and Transformation. It may be that a Lean review of a specific function would be more useful. Cllr Caddick has already been able to speak to the Head of People and Transformation about the Lean programme and HR issues.
6. **Statutory consultation around schools** – the length of time and sequence of events were raised as concerns. Issues of timescale or pace tend to lend themselves better to Lean reviews, but the consultation process is prescribed in statute with little discretion for the Council in applying it. The only area with scope for the Council to change is around its own governance, with decisions made at Local Committee, Strategic Committee and/or Council meetings. If Members are minded this aspect could be referred to the Policy Development Group for the People Committee. Apart from this review of Council governance, **it is proposed that activity on this is not prioritised** over any other action that may be needed as a result of the current review of schools’ governance.
7. **Links between land use and education planning** – This was subject to an internal [audit report](http://www.highland.gov.uk/staffsite/downloads/file/5640/internal_audit_for_information) in June 2016 and an action plan is in place to improve processes. Members can contact Malcolm MacLeod (Head of Planning and Environment) and/or Brian Porter (Head of Resources C&L) for a discussion on the action plan and feedback whether they feel further review activity is required. A **peer review is not proposed at this time**.

**New review areas proposed by staff**

Two new areas have been identified by staff for review. They are shown below and both could proceed as peer reviews with teams, Members and Trade Union representatives identified.

1. **Grey fleet** – this is car use among staff and Members. Currently around £3m per annum is spent on car hire, individual car use and pool cars. The Head of Performance and Resources in Community Services believes there is savings potential through alternative arrangements and staff in rural locations have expressed frustration in accessing hire cars during the local staff forums held over the winter. There is currently no Head of Service with overall responsibility for this as line managers approve individual travel requests and travel claims, but teams involved include those working in the Finance Service (travel desk, procurement and payroll), Development and Infrastructure Service (carbon emissions reporting), Community Services (Fleet) and Corporate Development (HR). **A peer review is recommended**.
2. **In-house catering for staff** – concerns about cost incurred and food waste have been raised by staff in the Dingwall office following Care and Learning Service events. In 2016-17 expenditure there totalled over £25,000. A wider review of catering for staff could explore alternative arrangements for a more sustainable and affordable service. **A peer review is recommended.**

**Other suggested review areas**

To develop a programme of reviews further ideas are welcome from:

* Members;
* Trade Union representatives;
* Directors and Heads of Service; and
* Staff – for staff we could develop another on-line challenge to seek their views and raise this in the next round of staff briefings. That worked well for the efficiency and commercial ideas.