

The Highland Council
Community Services Committee
21 August 2014

Agenda Item	8
Report No	COM/16/14

Community Services – Restructure of Area Services

Report by the Director of Community Services

Summary

This report informs and updates Elected Members on progress with the restructure of Community Services and recommends the creation of Assistant Area Managers to support the new Area Management structure already in place.

1. Background

1.1 As of 1 April 2014, much of what was Transport, Environmental & Community Services and Housing & Property Service became Community Services (**Appendix 1** shows the management structure and key responsibilities of each post).

1.2 The Service Management Team agreed a number of principles that would be applied in defining structure and service delivery options:

- capture synergies between similar functions currently undertaken separately;
- manager posts should be generic to the optimum level;
- focus on the best option for the customer;
- ensure the structure supports the delivery of the high volume customer contact activities;
- provide consistency in structure, delivery and outcomes; and
- enhance performance improvement and drive efficiency.

1.3 Phasing and timetabling is well underway and this report deals with Phase 2 below:

Phase	Action	Timetable
1	Appointment of Service Management Team	Completed by 1 April 2014
2	Appointment of Second Tier Managers	Following Community Services committee approval
3	Alignment of Service Teams with 4 new Areas	Following appointment of Second Tier Managers
4	Reviewing the asset base and seeking opportunities for rationalisation e.g. stores, depots, offices	Within 18 months

2. Appointment of Second Tier Managers

2.1 Proposal

2.1.1 The key aim is to ensure the implementation of an integrated service, as previously

agreed at Community Services Committee on 15 May 2014. To enable this, the 4 Area Community Services Managers conducted an analysis of current resources and Service needs taking into consideration a number of variables such as:

- number of Wards;
- number of Roads and Community Works operations;
- area population;
- number of houses;
- road length

2.1.2 This informed the number of second tier managers required to fulfil Service needs. Currently there are 16 HC11 posts made up of Principal Engineers; Community Works Managers; Assistant Area Property Managers; and Assistant Area Housing Managers within the structure, with a proposal to reduce that figure to 14 posts taking cognisance of the agreed principle that the second tier manager's posts needed to be generic to reflect the transformation to an integrated services model.

2.2 Process

2.2.1 In accordance with the Highland Council's Informing and Consulting with Staff, Change Management protocol, and in recognition of the work currently taking place on establishing an Engagement and Partnership Framework between management and Trade Unions, consultations have taken place with Trade Union colleagues.

2.2.2 The outcome of TU consultation was an agreement that all affected staff be briefed by the Director and this has happened. A draft job and person specification was provided to ensure an understanding of the new role and responsibilities along with information on a training and development programme.

2.2.3 All 16 HC staff have also had a 1-2-1 meeting with their Area CS Manager, HR representative and TU representative, where staff wished representation. Affected staff have been asked, as per the consultation process, for their input into the current proposal, development of final job and person specification and the training and development programme.

2.2.4 A number of redeployment opportunities have been identified within the Development and Infrastructure Service should ring-fenced staff feel that the new role is not something they would wish to pursue for their continued career with Highland Council. We are hopeful that there will be a natural reduction through redeployment of the numbers required (16 current staff to 14 in the new structure).

2.3 Supported Development Programme

2.3.1 HR Services have been working with the 4 Area CS Managers using a Training Needs Analysis approach based on the current job and person specifications, to develop a Training and Development Programme for the Assistant Area Managers.

2.3.2 This programme will be compulsory and will help support and develop staff to meet the requirements of the post.

3. **Service Development Progress**

3.1 As a next step, and as part of the 1-2-1 discussions, current HC11 area staff have had the opportunity of providing input into developing a service fit for purpose at the establishment level that reports to them. Work is on-going to analyse current resources in terms of numbers, specialist areas of knowledge and locations to

ensure that the newly created Assistant Area Managers have the resources they require in the right location and in right areas in terms of knowledge and understanding across the full spectrum of service delivery to deliver an integrated Service.

4. Communication and Community Engagement Progress

4.1 In continuing to meet the commitments of our new Staff Communication and Consultation Plan, the following has been achieved or is in progress:

1. After the first round of Staff Briefings, a Frequently Asked Questions document was issued to all staff based on questions asked and answers given by members of the Community Services Senior Management Team;
2. A second round of Staff Briefings from the Director is being arranged for September/ October 2014;
3. A Newsletter has been published to bring staff up-to-date with current progress on developing an integrated Service, including reiterating the vision for the Service and outlining how that will be achieved. The Newsletter will be produced three times per year;
4. A survey has been completed on communications to ascertain how staff wish to be communicated and consulted with. Responses from staff will form part of a review of the communications and consultation process;
5. Community/ Ward Forums are being planned for the Autumn to tie in with the Director's round of Staff Briefings;
6. A review of the communication role for Community Works Officers (CWO) is taking place consisting of the establishment of a good practice guide; a review and update of job and person specifications; and briefing and consultation with all CWOs to ensure they understand and are able to meet the Service requirements in terms of communication for this crucial role. Training and development needs in terms of key behaviours will be addressed to ensure that all CWO's work together as a team throughout the Highland area and develop core working practices that reflect need for service delivery and communication to communities and Council Members; and
7. A Members' Seminar on Consultation and Community Engagement took place on 23 June 2014. This considered how to improve communications with Members and communities and how we could better enable communities to do more for themselves/ support a stronger partnership approach with communities.

5. Implications

5.1 Resource

In recognition of the cultural and service delivery changes, the restructure of the Service will result in a saving which will form part of the overall savings for the Service. The Council's policy is to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible and this should be achievable but the process of adjustment could involve one-off costs arising from voluntary severance and redeployment.

- 5.2 Legal, Climate Change/ Carbon Clever, Equalities, Gaelic and Rural
There are no known legal, climate change/carbon clever, equalities, Gaelic or rural implications associated with the proposals contained in this report
- 5.3 Risks
There may be short-term performance risks associated with the change process which can be mitigated by leadership and training.

Recommendations

The Committee is invited to agree:

- i. the deletion of 16 existing HC11 specialist posts and the creation of 14 generic Assistant Area Manager posts to support the development of the integrated Service; and
- ii. that a report comes back to the next Community Services committee detailing phase 3 of the restructure, following appointment of the Assistant Area Managers.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Author: William Gilfillan, Director of Community Services

Kateryna Zoryk, HR Business Partner

Date: 31 July 2014

Appendix 1

