

The Highland Council
Community Services Committee
6 November 2014

Agenda Item	7
Report No	COM 33/14

Community Services – Restructure of Area Services

Report by the Director of Community Services

Summary

This report informs and updates Members on progress with the restructure of Community Services at area level and asks Members to note that a final report will be presented to committee in February 2015 following further Workforce Planning within the Service.

1. Background

- 1.1 Phasing and timetabling, as previously agreed at committee, is well underway with Phase 2 (below) now complete:

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. Phase 2 – Appointment of Second Tier Managers

- 2.1 Following Trade Union and staff consultation, the appointment procedures for Assistant Area Managers has taken place and 13 of the 14 posts have been filled.
- 2.2 The key aim is to ensure the implementation of an integrated service, as previously agreed at Community Services Committee on 15 May 2014.
- 2.3 Two redeployment opportunities were identified within Development and Infrastructure and these have been taken up by two of the affected staff in Community Services. A further member of staff has taken voluntary severance resulting in a vacancy that will be filled as soon as possible.

3. Workforce Planning

- 3.1 In the on-going development of Community Services as a newly integrated service, the Service's Senior Management Team have been utilising the corporate workforce planning tool and framework to identify the number of employees and

types of employee knowledge, abilities and behaviours that would be required to meet Service goals, strategic objectives and service delivery requirements.

- 3.2 The SMT agreed that the priority should be developing a resource structure fit for purpose for the four new area teams reflecting full integration. A Workforce Action Plan outlining the key areas of need/action to move where the service is now to where it wants to be, together with priorities and 'issues' identified, will be developed and shared with our Trade Union colleagues to help facilitate effective change management and implementation.
- 3.3 The other sections within Community Services (Roads and Transport, Environmental and Regulatory Services, Housing and Performance and Building Maintenance Services) will undertake their own workforce planning exercise in parallel. This is to ensure a clear understanding of whole Service requirements with regard to future workforce needs.
- 3.4 It is intended that this will be ready for our February committee.

4. Communication and Community Engagement Progress

- 4.1 A second round of Staff Briefings from the Director is underway and when complete a second Frequently Asked Question document will be issued to all staff providing information on questions asked of the Director and responses given;
- 4.2 Our second Community Services Newsletter will be published in November;
- 4.3 A survey on communication and consultation, which was part of the Communication and Consultation Plan for staff within Community Services, will be circulated to all staff in November 2014. This will be important in considering what improvements in relation to the Service change management approach may need to take place within the Service to facilitate improved staff engagement;
- 4.4 A series of 9 Community Services Open Evenings is underway with the Chairman, the Director and members of Community Services SMT meeting with communities to consider how we can better communicate and to discuss key savings proposals;
- 4.5 A review of the communication role for Community Works Officers (CWO) is nearing completion, including a review and update of job and person specifications and the delivery of a training programme to support staff in meeting standards of delivery required; and
- 4.6 Work Positive (a stress risk assessment tool) is being utilised within our Environmental Health section to help management identify stressors for staff and to work with staff to minimise or eradicate those stressors.

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 development of staff in focusing on importance of employee engagement

Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

- i. that Assistant Area Managers have now been appointed and a learning and development programme is underway to support them in meeting the requirements of their new role; and
- ii. that an up-to-date Action Plan on service restructuring will be presented to committee in February 2015 following further Workforce Planning within the Service.

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Date: 22 October 2014