

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT COMMITTEE
12 NOVEMBER 2009

Agenda Item	7.
Report No	ECS/51/09

Review of Administrative and Clerical Support Staff

Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport

SUMMARY

This report provides members with the initial recommendations arising from the review of the administrative and clerical function within the Service

1. Introduction

1.1 On the 8th November 2007 the ECS Committee approved proposals to review and restructure the administrative and clerical support staff functions across all sectors out-with schools (hereafter referred to as the review).

1.2 The review had the following objectives:

- To create an integrated support function across the Service.
- To establish the appropriate support structures to meet the needs of the revised management structures across the Service.
- To drive forward business improvement and the efficiency agenda.
- To manage change in a collaborative and open manner.

1.3 The review process has been outlined in previous reports to this Committee in September 2008 and May 2009. This report will outline the following:

- Support staff structures and line management arrangements
- Changes to service delivery
- Co-location
- Transition

1.4 In accordance with “Strengthening the Highlands” this report exemplifies how the Service is seeking to modernise service delivery in order to deliver efficiencies on an on-going basis.

1.5 This report has been discussed with trade union colleagues and they are comfortable with the content. All ECS staff within the scope of the review received a copy of this report on the 5th November 2009 along with a briefing paper explaining the next steps in the review.

2. The Corporate Context

2.1 The Council is committed to improving efficiency via the Corporate Improvement Programme using the diagnostic tool-kit devised by the Improvement Service. This approach will identify the scale of the opportunity to simplify, standardise and share functions to enable a strategic view to be taken of potential improvements

and efficiency savings that can be re-directed to front-line service delivery. This is currently being taken forward within a corporate improvement programme embracing 9 distinct projects.

- 2.2 Aspects of the ECS support staff review will ultimately converge with some of the projects within the corporate improvement programme. The ECS review has focused on the redesign of the existing support structure in order to meet the future business requirements of the ECS Service. It is anticipated that the corporate improvement programme will examine how some core support functions could ultimately be shared across a number of Services.

3. Implementation Timescale

- 3.1 The review comprised 3 distinct phases – analysis, redesign and implementation.

- 3.2 The analysis phase of the project identified evidence of the following:

- Fragmentation
- Duplication
- Lack of IT to support processes
- Manual processes
- Non-integrated systems and processes
- Individualistic work practices

- 3.3 **Annex 1** contains details of the current budgeted establishment for support staff across the non-schools sector including vacant posts. The 2008-09 ECS budget savings approved by the Highland Council on the 14th February 2008 included specific proposals to achieve savings of £433K following a review of the support structure (this savings proposal does not apply to the schools sector). The savings proposal equates to a reduction of approximately 20 support posts. There are currently 168.19 full-time equivalent (FTE) support posts across the Service out-with the schools sector. Within this number there are currently 43.95 FTE vacant posts. These posts have been held vacant in order to provide flexibility in implementing the change.

- 3.4 The implementation phase will take place on an iterative basis when the appropriate support structure for each site has been agreed. The critical activities during the implementation phase will include:

- Appointing the new support structures in accordance with the Council's personnel policies
- Where existing posts are deleted the redeployment of post-holders will be conducted in accordance with Council policy following the appropriate consultation with local elected members, trade unions and the members of staff affected.
- In parallel, revised systems and processes will be implemented where appropriate, including the roll-out of the upgraded Service management information system, Phoenix e1.
- The completion of the co-location of support functions to minimise fragmentation

4. Support staff structures and line management arrangements

- 4.1 It is proposed that, with the exceptions out-lined below, the organisational structure for the support staff function across the Service will be as detailed in **Annex 2**.
- 4.2 On the basis of the initial review it is proposed that 11.5% of the existing support structure is deleted, that is 19.31 FTE with a budgeted value of £0.317M. It is anticipated that the impact of this proposal can be almost wholly mitigated by deleting posts that are either vacant or filled by temporary agency staff. It should be noted however that the support staff function will continue to be reviewed on an on-going basis to reflect changes to management structures within the Service and also improvements in systems and processes.
- 4.3 The posts (or parts thereof) that previously carried out the School Transport administration function will be deleted and the related funding transferred to TEC Services. Members will recall that the School Transport administration function is now carried out by TEC Services.
- 4.4 An issue that requires further examination is the support structure relating to Joint Committee activities. This is out-with the immediate scope of this review. However, there is a need to examine how efficiencies could be achieved by reviewing the existing Joint Committee support activities and in particular identify where they overlap with the ECS support structure. This issue will be considered further when the governance arrangements for the Joint Committee have been determined.
- 4.5 **Annex 3** provides details of the support posts that will either be deleted from the ECS establishment or transferred to TEC Services. The posts that remain will form the basis of the new support structure. The composition of the revised structures will be developed during the transition phase out-lined below.
- 4.6 In this proposed model all staff supporting operational managers within an administrative Area will be line-managed by the appropriate Area Business Support Officer. All staff supporting HQ management and those carrying out a pan-Highland support function will be line-managed by the HQ Business Support Officer.
- 4.7 The exclusions to the above proposal are Catering and Cleaning support staff who will continue to be line managed on the current basis. In addition, the Staffing Unit in Dingwall is not included within the above proposals at this stage as the activities carried out will be reviewed within the frame-work of the Human Resource corporate improvement project.
- 4.8 The benefits of the above line management arrangements are as follows:
- The creation of a specialist business support framework
 - More effective utilisation of support staff
 - Improved staff development and career opportunities within the Personal Development Plan (PDP) framework.
- 4.9 It should be emphasised that support staff will continue to work very closely with strategic and operational managers, the main difference being the line management arrangements.

5. Changes in service delivery

5.1 In order to eliminate fragmentation and duplication it is proposed to deliver support activities in a different way. Within this, account was taken of Members initial concerns that points of presence should be maintained across the Highlands. It is proposed that support activities are delivered thus in future:

- Activities that by their very nature have to be carried out in each office locally
- Activities that could be carried out in a single office on a pan-Highland basis
- Activities of a pan-Highland nature that may require some local input

The above framework is outlined in **Annex 4**. Subject to members approval the above proposal will be implemented during the transition phase as outlined in section 7 below.

5.2 In addition it became apparent during the review process that there is an “unmet” support requirement. This was particularly evident within HQ where there is an identified requirement for increased administrative support. The framework outlined in paragraph 5:1 above will enable this higher level support to be provided within existing resources.

6. Co-location of staff

6.1 In order to create greater integration within the Service and to reduce duplication and fragmentation, co-location of staff was one of the principle objectives of the review. The following co-location of staff has already been achieved or will be achieved by the end of the current financial year:

- The Gaelic team co-located within the Town House, Inverness
- The majority of the Inverness, Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey support function co-located within the Area Office, Ardross Street, Inverness
- Catering and Cleaning staff (28:00 FTE) currently based in Harbour Road and Seafield Road, Inverness will be co-located within Ruthven House adjacent to Drummond School, Inverness (Ruthven House formed part of the former Drummond School and was surplus to requirements when the new school was built)
- The co-location of Dingwall-based ECS staff within the Area ECS Office at Castle Street, Dingwall
- Catering and Cleaning staff (8.00 FTE) currently based in Tulloch Street, Dingwall will relocate to the Area ECS Office, Dingwall by January 2010.

6.2 The office accommodation vacated as a result of the above moves has been notified to the Asset Management team within the Housing & Property Service in order that it can be utilised for other purposes.

6.3 In addition to the operational benefits of integration there have been financial savings to the Service as a result of the above moves. For example there will be a significant reduction in office equipment as a result of the co-location of Catering & Cleaning staff including:

- The removal of 4 fax machines
- A reduction in the number of photocopiers from 4 to 2

- A reduction in the number of printers from 14 to 4

7. Transition

7.1 Subject to members approval the next steps are as follows:

- Submit a report to the Resources Committee on the 2nd December 2009 formally deleting the 19.31 FTE posts identified in section 4 above from the ECS establishment. This report would also include a proposal to transfer 5.50 FTE posts to TEC Services within ECS that previously undertook the administration of School Transport
- Thereafter reducing the related ECS savings target by £0.317M to reflect the 19.31 FTE posts that to be deleted from the ECS establishment..
- Arrange to transfer the appropriate funding to TEC Services as outlined in paragraphs 4:3 above
- Create the appropriate Service support structure within the remaining budget, reflecting the types of post required to provide the most effective support function
- These revised structures to be submitted to the Resources Committee for consideration during the first quarter of 2010.
- Continued consultation with staff and trade union colleagues throughout.

7.2 In the intervening period complete the process of identifying the level of effort required to carry support activities. Thereafter allocate the activities identified in Annex 4 to the appropriate offices.

7.3 Implement the improvements to systems and processes identified during the review. In addition, work in conjunction with the Project Managers responsible for the relevant corporate improvement programmes to ensure that continuous improvement is delivered on an on-going basis.

8. RECOMMENDATION

8.1 The Committee is invited to recommend to the Resources Committee:

- The support staff organisational structure as outlined in **Annex 2**.
- The deletion of 19.31 FTE posts, saving £0.317M per annum, from the ECS budgeted establishment as detailed in **Annex 3**.
- The transfer of 5.50 FTE posts and funding relating to School Transport administration to TEC Services from the ECS establishment.
- The changes in line management for Service support staff as outlined in paragraph 4:6.
- The changes in support service delivery as outlined in section 5.
- The transition arrangements outlined in section. 7

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Author: Ron MacKenzie, Head of Support Services

Date: 30 October 2009

Ref: HF/RM

Background Papers:

Annex 1	ECS support staff budgeted establishment
Annex 2	Support staff organisational structure
Annex 3	Proposed reduction to support establishment
Annex 4	Support activities by location

Admin Assistants	0.00								
Clerical Assistants	8.50	4.50							
Secretary	1.00								
Total	11.50	4.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Pan Highland	EMA Unit	HIU Unit	Coaching Highland	Staffing Unit	LSU/Am Baile & Adult Literacy	Archives	Gaelic Devel op.	ICT	Procur e/ School s	Joint Committ ee	PM U	Psych. Servic es	Deaf Educatio n	I- Can Alne ss
BSO														
Assistant BSO	1.00			2.00	1.00				2.00	2.00				
Admin Assistants	1.00	0.60	1.00	4.58	2.00	1.00	1.00	0.50		5.00	2.00			
Clerical Assistants		1.00		11.90	2.50		1.00			1.00		1.79	0.50	0.09
Total	2.00	1.60	1.00	18.48	5.50	1.00	2.00	0.50	2.00	8.00	2.00	1.79	0.50	0.09

Current Pan Highland Vacancies:

- HIU - 0.1 Clerical Assistant
- Staffing Unit - 5.19 Clerical Assistants
- Highland Archive - 1.00 Admin. Assistant
- Gaelic Development - 1.00 Clerical Assistant
- Joint Committee - 1.00 Clerical Assistant

BSO	4.00
Asst BSO	14.00
Admin	44.86
Clerical Assts	104.34
Secretary	1.00
	168.19

Business Support - Organisational Structure

Performance & Business Support Manager

Business Support Officer CSER	Business Support Officer RSL	Business Support Officer INBS	Business Support Officer HQ and Pan Highland activities	Note 1
Revised structure supporting front-line service delivery within Caithness Sutherland and Easter Ross	Revised structure supporting front-line service delivery within Ross Skye & Lochaber	Revised structure supporting front-line service delivery within Inverness Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey	Revised structure supporting strategic management in HQ and pan-Highland functions	

Note 1: This excludes Staffing Unit

PROPOSED CHANGES TO ESTABLISHMENT

**ANNEX
3**

Area	Designation	Current FTE	Deletion FTE	Transfer FTE	Revision FTE
INBS	Business Support Officer	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
	Asst. BSO	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
	Admin. Assistant	5.68	0.00	2.00	3.68
	Clerical Assistant	19.73	5.60	0.00	14.13
RSL	Business Support Officer	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
	Asst. BSO	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
	Admin. Assistant	8.00	2.00	2.15	3.85
	Clerical Assistant	26.12	4.00	0.00	22.12
CSER	Business Support Officer	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
	Asst. BSO	2.00	0.00	0.00	2.00
	Admin. Assistant	2.50	0.00	1.35	1.15
	Clerical Assistant	12.64	2.21	0.00	10.43
HQ	Asst. BSO	2.00	0.00	0.00	2.00
	Clerical Assistant	8.50	3.50	0.00	5.00
	Secretary	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
Pan Highland	Asst. BSO	8.00	0.00	0.00	8.00
	Admin Assistants	18.67	0.00	0.00	18.67
	Clerical Assistants	19.78	1.00	0.00	18.78
Catering & Cleaning	Business Support Officer	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
	Admin. Assistant	10.00	0.00	0.00	10.00
	Clerical Assistants	17.57	1.00	0.00	16.57
		168.19	19.31	5.50	141.38

Activities that by their very nature have to be carried out in each office locally

- Absence Stats
- Budget support
- Ordering/Invoicing
- Health & Safety – managing devolved Capital budget allocation in response to identified needs
- Management Support
- Staffing issues – absence management, Disclosure Checks, interviews, disciplinary and grievance investigations, redeployments, PDP discussions, SU forms, exit interviews, leave, sickness, travel and subsistence claims
- Additional Support Needs – case-load management, support for local liaison groups, CSP completion, distribution and file maintenance
- Complaints – Freedom of Information research
- Placing requests
- Reserved places and capping of places
- ASN audit
- ASN allocation
- Summer activity programme support
- Active school co-ordinator support
- Parks and open spaces – general administration
- Community centre and facility support
- Peripatetic janitor time-tabling
- Events - support
- Support for School Residences
- Emergency Plan information and response i.e. details of all school sites evacuation plans/pupil lists/transport lists/staff lists and keyholder contacts
- Swimming time-tables – agreed this should be administered locally by the swimming pools
- Volunteer Disclosure Checking
- Consultation (statutory and non statutory) adverts, mailing and returns

Activities that could be carried out in a single office on a pan-Highland basis

- Bookings/ Courses/ Events
- Child Protection
- Property related – leases, residential properties – janitor house rentals, tenant nominations, bin permits key holder lists, RPO lists and School Emergency Plans, lettings – facilities, vehicles, venues
- ICT – maintenance of web-pages; set-up e-mail accounts, Oracle access, PECOS access, telephones and computers for new staff members maintenance of electronic staff information Outlook/Intranet Telephone directory generic groups etc, service generic mailbox
- National Entitlement Card administration (including Direct Debits)
- Staffing issues – disciplinary and grievance co-ordination, PDP and training plans co-ordination, research, advertising monitoring, job evaluation, restructures, Resources Committee
- Grants and bursaries, grant applications, Trust Funds
- Publications – newsletters and updating web-sites

- Distribution – materials and information
- Complaints – Freedom of Information co-ordination
- Vehicles – minibus licence administration
- Parent Council administration
- Trips & Excursions
- Primary school enrolments
- Pre School enrolments
- Administration Circulars
- Excellence in Attendance certificates
- Long Service Awards
- Annual checking of School Funds
- Children in Entertainment Licences and Employment of Children certificates.
- School Calendar Preparation
- Out of Authority Travel
- Annual Vehicle Declarations
- Mobile Phone ordering co-ordination
- Committee Administration
- Claims for staff costs, e.g. external secondments, HMIE deployments, SQA etc
- Licences e.g. PRS/PVSL etc.
- Small Isles Week
- Safe Highlander
- Torrin Outdoor Centre
- Education Maintenance Allowances
- Am Baile – Gaelic web-site
- Coaching Highland
- Instrumental Tuition administration/traditional music classes
- Youth Music Initiative
- Highland Youth Voice
- Duke of Edinburgh awards
- Children Missing from Education
- Placing of Sex Offenders
- Support for CPD programme
- Foreign Language Assistant administration
- More Choices More Chances project administration
- Gypsy Travellers
- Small Primary School Invoice Processing
- Procurement – PECOS/ScotExcel
- CALM training
- Active Schools Co-ordinators administration
- ICT administration
- Disability Sport
- Highland Football Academy
- Library Support Unit
- Adult Education
- Gaelic Development
- Exhibitions Unit
- Highland Culture administration
- Junior Golf
- Archive administration
- Outdoor Learning (Badaguish)

- Principal Facilities Officer – support
- Performance Management Unit
- Janitor and Road Crossing Patroller Clothing (All protective clothing)
- Janitor and Road Crossing Patroller training
- Road Crossing Patroller site review
- Childcare Fees administration
- Early Years – commissioned places administration and partner centre payments
- Early Years Training course administration

Activities of a pan-Highland nature that require some local input (this needs to be reviewed)

- Alignment of staffing levels with budgeted entitlements
- Allocation of CCR funding and teachers
- STACS analysis/discussion (exam results)
- Probationer teacher bids
- Budget setting discussions
- Collation of ILC needs analyses and facility planning
- Secondary timetable - governance
- Standards and Quality report
- School Improvement Plans
- School Profiles
- Early retirement invitations
- Normal age retirements
- Scotxed return to Scottish Government – pupil rolls, staffing etc
- Teachers staffing returns Scottish Government
- School capacity templates and updated class configurations – local input would be needed to capacity templates – admin asst function?