

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT COMMITTEE
21 MAY 2009

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Review of Administrative and Clerical Support Staff

Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport

SUMMARY

This report provides members with details of the redesign and implementation phase of the administrative and clerical support staff review across the Education Culture and Sport (ECS) 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 the non-school sectors (hereafter referred to as the review). Members were provided with an update on the 18th September 2008 which out-lined details of the analysis phase of the review and indicated that the next stages were re-design and implementation.

Progress with the re-design and implementation phase of the review has been delayed as a result of the requirement to manage conflicting priorities in the intervening period.

1.2 The original 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.

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 review will focus on the redesign of the existing support structure in order to meet the business

requirements across the ECS Service. It is anticipated that the relevant corporate projects will examine how some core support functions could ultimately be shared across a number of Services.

3. Implementation Timescale

3.1 The review comprises 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 151.5 full time equivalent (fte) support posts across the Service out-with the schools sector. Within this total there are currently 19.47 fte vacant posts. These vacancies have been held to provide flexibility in implementing the change programme.

3.4 The redesign phase will deliver the following outcomes:-

- Co-location of ECS support staff in order to reduce the fragmentation that currently exists.
- Design the appropriate support structures in order to meet the future needs of the Service.
- Design support structures that differentiate between core tasks (for example PECOS, Oracle processing etc) and more specialist tasks.
- Improve systems and processes to ensure optimum efficiency and productivity.
- Eliminate duplication of effort
- Create a “pool” of multi functional support staff within each office line managed by business support specialists.

3.5 The implementation phase will take place on an iterative basis when the appropriate support structure for each site by 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

3.6 It is anticipated that the redesign phase will be completed during the first quarter of the new financial year with implementation taking place thereafter. It is not possible to be precise about the completion of this phase as there are a number of dependencies relating to the appointments and redeployment processes which will take time to complete.

4. Other Related Changes to Date

4.1 Accommodation – a stated objective of the review was to create an integrated support structure. A key aspect of this objective was to co-locate the appropriate support staff wherever possible:

- The co-location of the majority of the Inverness, Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey area ECS support team in Ardross Street, Inverness was completed in December 2008.
- Currently the area ECS staff based in the Dingwall area are in the process of being co-located in Castle Street, Dingwall.
- In addition during the summer of 2009 the Catering and Cleaning staff currently based in Harbour Road and Seafield Road Inverness will be co-located with colleagues in existing office accommodation adjacent to the Drummond Special School.

4.2 School Transport Administration – the ECS Committee in May 2008 approved the creation of an integrated Transport Unit within TEC Services. A project group has been established to oversee the transitional arrangements which will be completed by August 2009 when the new staffing structure within TEC Services will be in place. A number of existing ECS employees, the majority of whose job content related to school transport administration, have been matched into some posts within the new structure. The ECS Service is committed to providing a funding contribution of £109K towards the new staffing structure within TEC Services. This funding will be transferred at the appropriate time during this financial year.

4.3 School support staff review – a project group, that includes Head Teachers and school-based support staff, has been established to review the existing support structures within schools. This group will identify the future support needs of schools and the related structure. Initial proposals will be brought to this Committee in August 2009.

5. Change management

- 5.1 One of the objectives of the review is to manage change in an open and collaborative manner. When the proposed structures for each site are available there will be discussions with local elected members, trade union representatives and the staff affected by the proposals. Colleagues from the Personnel Service will work with ECS staff throughout to ensure that the Council's personnel policies and procedures are adhered to.
- 5.2 When revised structures for each site have been agreed in principle there will be a report submitted to the next available Resources Committee seeking member approval for the amendments to structure. Thereafter, subject to member approval, the appropriate amendments will be made to support staff budgets.

6. Resource and equality implications

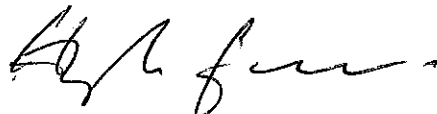
- 6.1 At this stage in the review it is difficult to be precise about the possible outcomes. However it is certain that on the basis of the information gathered to date that some changes to processes and structures will be required. In addition there may be changes to some work locations. The objective however is to ensure that the support structure is as efficient as possible.
- 6.2 When future support staff structures are being considered one of the key principles will be to ensure that there is equality of provision across all geographical areas of the Highlands.
- 6.3 In order to maximise the effectiveness of the revised systems and processes introduced during the review there is a commitment to ensure that all relevant employees receive the appropriate training and support.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 Members are asked to approve:

The redesign and implementation phases of the review of ECS administrative and clerical support staff which will result in the creation of new support structures across the ECS Service

Signature:



Designation: Director of Education, Culture & Sport

Author: Ron MacKenzie, Head of Support Services

Date: 6th April 2009.

Ref: HF/RM

Background Papers:

Annex 1 ECS support staff budgeted establishment

ECS SUPPORT STAFF											ANNEX 1									
Cost Centre Description	Accounting Technician	Admin Asst 1	Admin Asst 2	Area Business Support Officer	Business Support Officer 2	Receptionist	Clerical Asst 1	Clerical Asst 2	Vacant Admin Asst	Vacant Business Support Officer	Vacant Clerical Asst	Vacant Senior Clerical Asst	Secretary	Senior Staffing Officer	Business Support Officer 3	Business Support Officer 5	Research Asst	EMIAS Coordinator	Museum Attendant	TOTAL
Adult Literacy		1.00																		1.00
Am Bala (NOF)			1.00				0.50													1.50
Ardenmurchan Hostel							0.27													0.27
Badenoch Leisure Centre							0.50													0.50
Budget Project		0.07																		0.07
Catering Administrative Staff			3.00				7.57	2.00		0.50					1.00					13.07
Client Officer			2.50				0.57													6.80
CLL Manager, B&S							0.34													0.57
Community Centre Development, Inverness																				2.23
Core Management Team					4.00		4.00	0.95						1.00						10.95
Culloden Community Complex							1.00													1.00
Determined to Succeed 2008/09																				0.50
Educational Psychologists																				2.00
EMA - Co-ordination		1.00					0.78	1.00												2.78
Floral Hall																				0.54
Highland Deaf Education Services		0.54					0.46													1.00
Highland Folk Museum, Kinrossie							1.00													1.00
i-CAN Project						0.08														0.08
ICT Unit - Central Systems									1.00											2.00
Inclusion Fund																				0.50
Inverness Museum And Art Gallery							0.50													1.00
IRC Project		0.07																		0.07
Knochenberrie H.S. Special Education Library Support Unit Inverness					1.00		0.05													1.05
Nairn Community Education Office							0.10			0.43										0.53
Quality Improvement Support		1.00					5.00	1.50												7.50
Staffing Unit			4.57				8.71	1.50		1.00				1.69						17.48
Sutherland Area Learning Support Team							0.16													0.16
The Jenny's Hoose																				0.43
Wester Ross Learning Support Teams							0.08													0.08
Cleaning Administrative Staff		1.00	2.00				4.71													7.71
GIRFEC Project																				1.00
Childcare & Early Education		1.00								0.40										1.40
Merkinch Community Centre																				1.00
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspay Ross, Skye, Lochaber		1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00		5.54		1.00	3.50										15.04
Gaelic Development		3.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	9.33	1.50		1.00										22.03
Highland Instrumental Unit			0.60				0.90													1.50
Gaithness, Sutherland, Easter Ross			1.00	1.00	2.00		5.62	1.03		3.07										13.56
Integrated Children's Services																				4.00
Performance Management Unit		3.00			1.00															4.00
Auchtertyre Community Centre, Auchtertyre							0.34	0.43									2.00			2.77
Coaching Highland		1.00																		1.00
Community Education Office, Alness							0.83													0.83
Community Education Office, Knochenberrie							0.34													0.34
James Cameron Centre							0.29													0.29
MP33									1.00											1.00
Grand Total	1.00	13.68	18.67	3.00	10.00	1.42	64.24	9.90	23.00	15.00	15.47	2.00	1.00	1.69	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	0.50	151.57