



Report to: Full Council

Date of Meeting: 1 March 2007

Report from: Head of Regeneration
Title of Report: Regeneration Service Restructure

Agenda Item Number: **13**

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out proposals for the restructure of the regeneration service.

2. CONSULTATION

2.1 Consultation has taken place with a number of interested parties in recent months. This has included:

- Consultation with all individual staff in the service, both collectively and on a one to one basis.
- Consultation with staff who it is proposed should transfer to the Regeneration Service.
- Consultation with Trades Unions.
- Consultation on process with Human Resources, who were in attendance at all meetings.
- Consultation on the substance of the proposals with Corporate Management Team, who are supportive of the proposals.

3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

3.1 Regenerating the District is Corporate Priority Number 4. All of the work of the Regeneration Service will contribute to that objective. One of the key principles of the restructure has been to align the structure of the service with the agreed actions under this Priority, to enable the authority better to deliver. This means that under the proposed new structure, there is more capacity available to support the development of priority areas such as economic development and tourism.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial and Value for Money Statement

The financial implications of this restructure will be neutral to the general fund.

Value for money considerations have been critical to the development of the proposals. This is reflected in the proposals in a number of ways, Specifically, in developing proposals, an assessment of every step of the value chain - costs, inputs, outputs, and outcomes – was made.

In making this assessment, it was observed that while there was no realistic opportunity to increase costs, that the previous structure was failing to maximise the impact of the current costs. For example, the structure was not built around identified priority outcomes, some thematic areas that have been identified as priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy and Regeneration Strategy (such as economic development and tourism) were not being taken forward due to lack of capacity, and the costs of some activities, such as in project management, were unnecessarily high due to the requirement of external assistance due to lack of in-house capacity.

The proposed restructure rebuilds the service in such a way that the structure is aligned to the key challenges and priorities facing the service, with all gaps filled. The proposed structure also boosts the internal project management capabilities, which will limit the cost of future outsourcing.

Finally, through taking a corporate approach on the proposed restructure, it has been possible to add value to the corporate approach to community development and community engagement through the proposed new community development section, which integrates a number of the functions that had previously been managed across a number of services, to add value to their efforts through closer working.

In summary, by adopting this approach, this restructure will enable the service to do more in economic development, tourism, community development, and project management, at no increased cost to the Council.

4.2 Legal

Staff identified as being at risk of redundancy (this affects a maximum of two members of staff) as a result of the proposals have been advised.

4.3 Personnel

As this report deals with the proposed review of the structure of the regeneration service, there will be personnel implications for all members of the service. The extent of those implications will vary according to the extent of changes in roles, reporting arrangements, and job descriptions, and will become clearer as the

consultation process proceeds. HR have been fully involved in discussions to date.

4.4 Other Services

There are implications for Leisure Services and for the Assistant Chief Executive's Service, with proposals, as agreed by CMT, for some staff to move across to the regeneration service, into the proposed community development section.

4.5 Diversity

By creating a new community development section within the regeneration service, the service and Council as a whole will be better able actively to promote diversity and work with diverse groups. The work of the proposed community development section will include staff working with hard to reach groups (including young people), and will benefit from being part of one team specifically dedicated to community development and community capacity building, within one service that is able to respond to those issues.

4.6 Risk

The main risks are those risks that are attached to the deletion of some posts from the establishment, such as the Partnership, Participation and European Officer, a Regeneration Contracts Assistant, and the Commercial Manager. It is, however, felt that the new structure better reflects corporate and strategic priorities, and that

4.7 Crime and Disorder

Crime and Disorder are among the functions of the regeneration service. The existing community safety team will be enhanced through the establishment of dedicated operatives for the CCTV service, and by the inclusion within a community development function that includes, for example, work in drug and substance misuse prevention, that currently sits within leisure services. Therefore development work, strategic work, and delivery and enforcement will be placed together.

4.8 Other Implications

There are no other implications from this report.

5. **BACKGROUND, POSITION STATEMENT AND OPTION APPRAISAL**

Background

5.1 The regeneration service's current responsibilities include (but are not restricted to) a mix of statutory and non-statutory services, including:

- Asset management
- Community regeneration projects
- Community safety
- Corporate landlord function
- European funding
- GIS
- Homelessness
- Industrial Estates
- Land disposal
- Market
- Planning policy
- Private landlords
- Regeneration policy and strategy
- Single Housing Investment Programme
- Skills and training issues
- Strategic housing
- Town Centre issues

The current structure of the regeneration service is attached at Appendix A to this report.

Structure Review

5.2 The principles of the structure review have been as follows:

- To streamline reporting arrangements;
- To focus activity around a smaller number of better defined teams, each of which make clear and direct contribution to the regeneration strategy;
- To enhance the project management capabilities of the service;
- To enhance the community development role of the Council by bringing together a number of staff from other services within the regeneration service to make the best use of resources;
- To fill identified, crucial gaps in the Council's service (such as economic development and tourism);
- To enable the Council to meet its statutory obligations, in particular areas such as community safety, planning policy, and homelessness;
- To enable the Council to meet future challenges, such as land disposal and development, strategic housing, and the LDF;
- To develop some (albeit limited) capacity in the crucial areas of research and externally-focused work (that would cover partnership working in areas such as economic development and tourism), to maximise the impact of regeneration;
- To rationalise administrative arrangements;
- That there should be no net increase in the costs of the service.

- 5.3 The revised structure includes five units, plus centralised administrative support, that will be available to all teams, subject to need. Those units are as follows:
- i. A regeneration & planning strategy unit. This unit will oversee the development and implementation of both the regeneration strategy and the Local Development Framework. By linking this work, there is an increased opportunity to ensure that the regeneration strategy is strongly reflected in spatial planning. The unit would also ensure that the regeneration service and wider Council would have access to meaningful information relating to the profile of neighbourhoods within the District to. An economic development and tourism officer will provide some specific assistance and expertise in these areas that at the moment are significant gaps. An urban design function would also sit here, funded by Planning Delivery Grant, and shared with Development Control.
 - ii. A strategic housing unit. This team will be responsible for the Council's statutory role as a strategic housing authority. The team will play an important role in raising standards, attracting investment, and in managing the Council's day to day relationships with the proposed RSL, as well as the wider housing sector (such as the Housing Corporation and existing RSLs). It will also have responsibility for the management of residual housing functions – though these will be the subject of further discussions with the proposed RSL, and some services may be contracted out through a Service Level Agreement.
 - iii. A community development unit. This unit is a new unit, including both the existing community safety structure, and the proposed additions of the Community Engagement Officer, Community Development Health Worker, Youth Health and Cultural Change Worker, and youth workers. The rationale for this is that it will bring about the following benefits:
 - a. It will add value to the work of community engagement at a corporate level, as there will be a natural and clear structural link between community engagement work and deliverable outcomes;
 - b. It will add value to the work of all staff within the regeneration service by informing the development and delivery of local approaches to regeneration;
 - c. It will provide an opportunity to enable the social and physical elements of regeneration are properly joined up – which is always a difficult challenge in regeneration.
 - d. It will be of no net cost to the Council, and indeed by removing the possibility of duplication of work, it enables increased outcomes derived from existing expenditure.
 - iv. An asset management & development unit. This unit will remain similar to its present role, but with a broader focus and wider responsibilities than before. Rather than a narrow asset management function, and with support from the rest of the service, the unit will be developed so that it can deal with the identification and disposal of surplus land, and

engagement with developers, to drive forward the development of the District.

- v. A programme management unit. This unit will be the delivery-focussed unit of the service, and will have responsibility for the delivery of regeneration objectives. It will manage the effective delivery of existing and future regeneration projects in the District, on time and to budget. One post, working in the villages, will be funded through SHIP until the end of March 2008 and will lead on work such as the development and delivery of the Sacriston Area Development Framework. Another post will focus on the town centre, identifying opportunities and delivering projects in the Town Centre, and specifically leading on the development and delivery of a masterplanning process. The enhancement of this unit will add further delivery capacity to existing regeneration projects, such as SHIP, and Pelton Fell NRP.

Consultation responses

- 5.4 A consultation process took place, which involved consultation with the Trades Unions, as well as at a team meeting, and one to ones with all members of staff in the service. The consultation process ended on Friday 5th January 2007. The majority of issues raised were able to be resolved in those meetings.
- 5.4 Generally, consultation responses were very positive. Consultation responses are provided on an attached Appendix (on green paper, due to the personal nature of the details). No objections were received from Trades Unions. Some minor changes in reporting arrangements were made on the basis of the consultation responses received, and these are incorporated.

Financial and redundancy implications

- 5.5 The financial starting point for the restructure was that there should be no net cost to the Council's general fund. A number of posts in the proposed structure are not, or will not, be charged to the general fund. These include the Head of Regeneration and Town Centre Development Manager (charged to capital), the Urban Designer (vacant, to be charged to PDG), the Private Landlord Accreditation Officer (funded by SSCF), the Youth Health & Cultural Change Officer (funded by PCT), the Regeneration Officer (Villages) and the Finance & Monitoring Assistant (charged to SHIP).
- 5.6 The detail of the financial implications of the proposals on the general fund are attached as an Appendix (on green paper due to the nature of the information provided). The financial implications of these proposals will result in an estimated net saving of £504 per annum.

Implementation Date

- 5.7 Subject to Council approval, recruitment for vacant posts, in line with Council policies and procedures including protection for those at risk of redundancy, will commence immediately. The start date of the new proposals is recommended as 1 April 2007.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 That full Council agree the proposed restructure for the regeneration service.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO

- 7.1 HR Policy on Restructures

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