

17 December 2008

LGR Update



**Report of George Garlick, Chief Executive
(Cabinet Portfolio Holder Councillor Simon Henig, Leader)**

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the LGR programme, which continues to make good progress.

Senior Management Appointments

2. The recruitment process for the Heads of Service appointments is being carried out this month. In total 31 Heads of Service are being appointed of which 13 have been slotted in. The process to fill the remaining posts is considering internal candidates only at this stage, and involves an assessment centre, application form and interview. These interviews are being undertaken by the new Corporate Directors.
3. It is hoped that by the time of this Council meeting decisions on who has been appointed will be known.

HR

4. The HR work is mainly focussed on the implementation of the restructure and the supporting policies underpinning the process. It is anticipated that the next phase of the restructure will be undertaken during February.
5. In order to progress the next phase of service design and implementation a separate team of HR and Finance Officers has been established to develop the detailed plans and undertake the implementation of the restructure beneath the Heads of Service.
6. The HR team have put in place robust career transition support which is available to all staff at each stage of the process.

Area Action Partnerships (AAPs)

7. The consultation on final geography for the AAPs is now completed with the final event being held on 10th December. In total 13 meetings have taken place in specific parish areas during November and December.
8. Members, stakeholders and statutory partners have also by consulted through a series of seminars and meetings held during the same period. These considered the function, governance and budgets for the AAPs

and included 2 Member seminars, a workshop for key stakeholders, and meetings with each Local Strategic Partnership, each thematic partnership and the County Durham Strategic Partnership Board.

9. A consultation document and feedback questionnaire is also available at the 'New Era' website which can be returned up until 5th January 2009.
10. Once the consultation process is complete final proposals for Members to consider and agree will be brought forward in January

Members Seminar

11. The series of seminars are continuing with this months providing Members with information on the South East Durham Growth Point, information from the Communications workstream on a new County wide newspaper, a more detailed update on AAPs and a demonstration from the Waste workstream.
12. In January the seminar is planning to update Members on arrange of key policy papers including several relating to Housing.

LGR Programme Priorities

13. Workstreams continue to progress the development of the policy framework and harmonisation of service standards across the county. This includes the examination of key housing policies such as the common lettings policy and transportation issues such as the harmonisation issues arising from the County Durham Travel Scheme.
14. In response to requests from Members the LGR programme are currently pulling together all proposed policy changes which impact on existing fees, charges and concessions into a single report in order to identify the impact across the County of the changes suggested.
15. This report will be brought forward to Members in January with other reports covering for example Area Action Partnerships, Housing Policies (including Homelessness, Financial Assistance, Housing Options) and South East Durham Growth Point

Communications

16. Another key area of activity particularly in the last few months before Vesting Day is to refresh the programmes communication strategy. We will need to put in place a coordinated series of messages to the general public and stakeholders in the run up to vesting Day ensuring they are aware of the changes and the impact on them.

Recommendations

17. Full Council is asked to note the contents of this report.

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