

CONSULTATION PAPER

THE NEW COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS DIRECTORATE

This consultation document is targeted at a range of audiences both internal and external to the Directorate. The aim of the document is to initiate discussion about the new Directorate, its future structure, and strategic drivers both internal and external.

Clearly certain details of the document will be of more interest to some readers than others. During the consultation period there will also be opportunities for face to face dialogue. All comments received will be non-attributable in any future reports.

Background

1 April 2010 saw the establishment of four new Directorates within the City of York Council (CYC). The new structure will enable the Council to:

- Provide greater levels of Customer Service
- Increase Delivery/responsiveness at neighbourhood level
- Strengthen our focus on securing sustainable economic prosperity
- Anticipate and plan for demographic change
- Work more closely with partners
- Eliminate waste and duplication
- Make efficiency savings

This paper concerns itself with the high level structure of one of those new Directorates, Communities and Neighbourhoods (CANs). This brings together the former group of services known as Neighbourhood Services with Housing Services and Life Long Learning and Culture. It also includes the Corporate Equalities team, Community cohesion and supporting and developing the Voluntary sector.

The Directorate delivers a very wide range of services which together play a significant role in day to day life experienced in York and supports residents, visitors and businesses alike. Services are delivered and monitored against a broad range of national performance indicators, 21 targets within the Local Area Agreement and the Directorate makes a significant contribution to the overall organisational performance.

We work with a large number of partner organisations within a range of formal and informal agreements and contribute to all the key objectives of the Without Walls Partnership. The Directorate also directly supports three groups within the Local Strategic Partnership these being, York@large, Safer York Partnership and the Inclusive York Forum, as well as many of the subgroups.

Key CANs facts are as follows:

- The Directorate has 2400 employees
- The budget is a total of £70.2 Million which is made up of a number of different funding streams
- We support five Executive member portfolio holders
- Services are provided from a very wide range of locations (44 in total!). including key Council premises across the City, Adult Education and Community Centres, Libraries, Energise, the Registry Office and the Crematorium
- We visit every household in York a least once a week, every week of the year.
- Some of our services are provide 24 hours a day
- We estimate that we complete 5 million customer transactions a year.

Operating Environment

We are delivering services in a rapidly changing environment, some of the these are listed below:-

- Increasing pressures on public finances
- Increasing Public expectation and accountability
- Greater need to ensure equality of access to services - to ensure no one is excluded
- Increased demands to transact in different ways with the Council
- Changing demographics of the population
- Sustainability of services and adaptation to climate change
- Dynamic Economic Environment

Culture and Vision

Members of the new CANs Directorate Management Team (DMT) and the extended DMT (all Heads of Service) have set out their drivers for these services both internally and externally. Many of these points pick up the recommendations from the Excellence in Everything programme originally led by Neighbourhood Services. This senior leadership group is very clear, that our developing internal culture must reflect the following:-

- Strong and effective workforce development
- A CAN do culture
- A workforce that is proud to work for the Council
- Open to challenge/new ways of working, innovative
- Strong and effective communications
- High performing, efficient services
- Maximising use of technology
- Strong links corporately
- Demonstrate strong financial management/value for money
- Eliminate waste and duplication
- Lead the way in managing wellbeing/health and safety
- Reducing carbon footprint
- Supports elected members effectively as community leaders
- Outward looking and in touch with National Policy/Planning

The Directorates Business Support team clearly will play a huge role in the coordination of some of the above aspirations. It is evident that the review of this function needs to progress at some pace to support the new portfolios. That function is not within the scope of this paper but the review of this service will be brought forward. This service will continue to report to the Director.

The new Directorate is a huge opportunity to make a real difference and work more efficiently and effectively for the benefit of all our customers. Also, to really focus on the priorities clearly set out in the corporate strategy and by the Without Walls Partnership. Many of the linkages between services have worked very well informally for a number of years. The new structures therefore do give us the opportunity to build further on these relationships and also challenge some of the more traditional approaches to service delivery.

Our developing external culture must reflect the following points:-

- Provide high quality customer experience and excellent levels of Customer Service
- Increase targeted delivery/responsiveness at neighbourhood level
- Strong and effective partnerships
- Improved Engagement/participation/empowerment
- Building Community capacity
- Improving Health and Well being
- Supporting a strong voluntary sector
- Strengthen Community Cohesion
- Equal access to services
- Extended broad Culture Offer
- Extended Learning
- Clean and green open spaces
- A Safe York and safe communities
- Contribution to broader City agendas

Phase 2 of the Organisational Review

The first phase of the organisational review was approved by the Executive of the Council in December 2009. This phase was implemented from 1 April 2010. This paper now deals with phase 2 which relates to the Assistant Director level. The further discussions around the grades 10/11 and 12 are not specifically covered in this document. This will be subject to further discussion at phase 3.

Consultation Timetable

The consultation timetable is as follows:

- 6 May consultation launched
- 25 May consultation on proposed portfolios closes
- 25 June Executive report published
- 6 July recommendations on the structure of all four new Directorates to Executive

Proposed business shape

In developing the proposed business shape detailed within this paper opportunity has been taken to:-

- Seek early views and thoughts from the Assistant Directors and colleagues on Corporate Management Team.
- Take external challenge from the Hay group
- Reflect on the impact of other work streams of the **More for York** programme, in particular the impact of implementing a more centrally managed set of support services.
- Learn from the experience of other local authorities with similar structures or groupings of services.
- Set out through events for DMT and extended DMT the early thoughts around internal and external drivers for the Directorate.
- Reflect some of the developing thinking around working in more focused ways with Partners in neighbourhoods using various sources of data and intelligence more effectively.
- Review the role of the Assistant Director in the strategic development and positioning of services.

The grouping of services set out on Page 6 strengthens delivery against the council and partnership priorities. However, with any option there will be advantages, disadvantages and risks. It would be helpful to receive views on these during the consultation process.

Proposed shape (Three groups of Services)

Corporate Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy			
Sustainable City	Thriving City Safer City	Learning City Inclusive City Healthy City City of Culture	
Communities and Neighbourhoods			
Organisation design	<p><i>Group 1</i></p> <p>Cleaner and Greener</p> <p>Waste Cleaning Neighbourhood Pride Fleet Street Environment Parking Civil Engineering Highways Infrastructure Parks and Open Spaces</p>	<p><i>Group 2</i></p> <p>Safer and Stronger</p> <p>Licensing Bereavement and Registry Services Environmental Health and Trading Standards Safer York Partnership Housing Services Housing Operations Strategy and Enabling Building Maintenance Private Sector Housing</p>	<p><i>Group 3</i></p> <p>Communities and Culture</p> <p>Libraries and Archives Sport, Active Leisure Play Arts and Culture Adult Learning Community and Voluntary Sector Equalities and Cohesion Neighbourhood Management</p>

Consultation

We are keen to receive feedback from a wide range of staff, internal colleagues as well as our partners. As described earlier in the document our consultation period will run from 6 May – 25 May.

During that period there will be:-

- Sharing of this document with all staff
- Access to a discrete response mail box sally.burns@york.gov.uk
- DMT briefing sessions on 6 and 15 May with expectations of further cascade to teams during team briefings
- Two open access sessions for all staff who wish to attend on 11 and 25 May for discussion with the Director.
- 18 May – Meeting for all Assistant Directors
- Discussion at the Directorate JCC
- Discussion within partnership forums and with key partners
- Discussion with regulators of services or those who have an interest such as the Audit Commission, the Housing Inspectorate, and Lacors

The Consultation questions are set out at Annex A.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Sally Burns
Director of Communities and Neighbourhoods
May 2010

Annex A

Consultation Questions; Please do not feel you have to complete all questions. Do not be concerned if one response encapsulates many questions – it is the feedback we welcome. Responses are welcomed from individuals, teams, clusters or partnership organisations.

What do you see as the key opportunities associated with a Directorate of Communities and Neighbourhoods?

What do you see as the key risks associated with a Directorate of Communities and Neighbourhoods?

Does the section on culture in the paper describe the sort of organisational culture you would wish to see?

Does the grouping of services make sense to you? If not, what would you do differently? Can you identify where services would alternatively go?

What other comments would you wish to make which will assist decision making on the structure and culture of the new Directorate? What do we need to make sure is retained? What do we need to do differently?

Consultation responses can be signed or unsigned and come from individuals or teams/services. They can be sent either in the post to the Guildhall or electronically – sally.burns@york.gov.uk or chiefexec@york.gov.uk