

Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee

3 December 2008

Report of the Director of City Strategy, the Director of Neighbourhood Services, and the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services

Transfer of Services from City Strategy to Neighbourhood Services, and between Neighbourhood Services and Learning, Culture and Children's Services – Further Information

Summary

1. This report responds to concerns raised by Staffing & Urgency Committee members at their meeting on 6th November 2008. This report should be read in conjunction with the earlier paper (Appendix 1), and includes the same recommendations.

Background

2. Members considered a detailed report proposing a number of staff and service transfers between directorates at their meeting on 6 November 2008. At that meeting members asked for clarification on a number of issues. These were as follows:
 - The level of risk inherent in the proposals had increased due to the intention of the Director of Neighbourhood Services to leave the authority at the end of January 2009. Members wanted to be reassured that the delivery of the services transferring to Neighbourhood Services would not be effected by the Director's departure.
 - Members wanted to understand why the CCTV service will not be recommended to transfer from City Strategy to Neighbourhood Services as originally envisaged.
 - Members wanted clarification over the strategic highways functions that would remain within City Strategy.

Risks - Implementation Plan

3. The Director of Neighbourhood Services will leave the council at the end of January 2009. Members considered that this raises the level of risk attaching to the proposed transfer of services. The risks will be mitigated as follows:

- A detailed implementation plan will be put in place (Appendix 2). This will set out the steps to be taken between the transfer being agreed, and a further Phase 2 report being brought to Neighbourhood Services EMAP in July 2009. The intention is to prepare the implementation plan and make it available to members prior to the Staffing & Urgency Committee meeting.
 - A report has been prepared for City Strategy EMAP on 8 December 2008 that seeks approval for 2009/10 highway maintenance programmes. The timing of the proposed transfer comes at the most opportune time of the year from a highway maintenance point of view, having completed the survey works and submitted outline programmes for the coming financial year. The last quarter of the financial year normally provides an opportunity to plan for the coming year whilst completing the current years programmes.
 - An interim appointment will be made to manage Neighbourhood Services in the period between the current Director leaving, and a new Director coming into post. This will be key to ensuring a smooth transfer and minimise the risks. The interim Director will be responsible for ensuring progress on the implementation plan and providing the strategic guidance necessary. Highways operational matters will be dealt with by the Assistant Director Maintenance Services who has been liaising and working with the transferring services over several months in preparedness for the transfer whilst the Assistant Director Environmental Services will manage the parking service.
4. There are also risks in not implementing the proposed transfers. These surround the non delivery of the efficiencies and service improvements envisaged through Stage 2 of the transfer paper. If the Highways service is transferred, it will be thoroughly reviewed, and brought into an existing review currently being undertaken by the Easy @ York programme. It is also possible that there would be a degree of continuing uncertainty within the highways service if it now stayed within City Strategy, given that the transferring staff have now been working with AD Maintenance Services in detail over several months. This also affects the 'Streetworks' team, expecting to remain with City Strategy but with an internal move planned to the Network Management section, where it will assist in coordinating and managing all the utility and other works on the network, so that disruption to traffic flow is kept to a minimum.

CCTV

5. The council has an extensive CCTV network. This network was originally developed as a traffic management tool but has been extended the cover public order issues. The cameras are monitored from within St Leonard's Place and at the control room at Fulford Police Station. The expertise within the council for providing and maintaining the existing systems and providing new comes from within a small team in City Strategy who are also responsible for the city's traffic signals, urban traffic control, variable message signs and systems, and bus information and control systems.

6. Facilities to monitor these cameras exist with the Network Management section at St Leonard's Place. Staff in Network Management have all the expertise to use the information provided by the cameras to assist with normal day-to-day operations in managing the urban traffic flows, using a variety of system tools at their disposal. The use of the CCTV cameras for traffic management one of the essential tools for the Network Management group. The Network Management group also has the expertise required to maintain the CCTV cameras, as well as the experience of funding, development and strategic positioning.
7. The CCTV control room at Fulford Police Station is dedicated to public order issues but there has never been any problem with working in close cooperation with the Safer York Partnership.
8. Officer opinion is that to break up the small team of three within the network management to transfer the CCTV service to Neighbourhood Services would not be the best use of this resource and would impact on the economy of scale. By working closely together as we already do on both traffic management and public order issues we can continue to provide a high level of service with the CCTV control room predominantly monitoring public order issues and City Strategy traffic management.

Strategic Highways and Transport Planning Functions

9. Under the proposals, City Strategy will retain its strategic transport planning functions. These include development and implementation of the local transport plan, public transport operations, road safety and travel planning as well as the management of the highway network including highway development control and public rights of way.
10. Critically, City Strategy will retain the strategic responsibility for car parking both on street and off street including the development of new areas and the setting of charges. Car parking both on street and off street are key components in the way that the transport networks of the city operate and are of strategic importance. Parking is also a significant element of major planning developments and therefore aligns with the highway development control function within City Strategy.
11. Neighbourhood Services will be responsible for the development of highway maintenance strategies and where necessary feeding into the overall transport strategy particularly in the local transport plan, but principally it will be responsible for the day to day operation and delivery of the highway maintenance programmes.
12. For example Neighbourhood Services will become responsible for the way in which highways maintenance budgets are spent through development and implementation of the highway asset management plan, which includes the setting up of maintenance strategies, forward programmes and the creation of the strategic approach to service procurement.

13. Similarly Neighbourhood Services will be responsible for the management and operation of the parking enforcement service. This will include the civil enforcement officers, the issuing of parking control notices as well as the administration of those notices and appeals. Administration will also include the issuing of the various parking permits that the city uses.

Consultation

14. Staff and the unions have been consulted on the proposed transfers.
15. There were relatively few comments and queries from staff involved in the parking and grounds maintenance transfers. In each case the Head of Service has provided an answer.
16. Highways staff have made a significant number of detailed comments and queries. This is to be expected as the proposed highways maintenance transfer is a more complex transfer involving moving some but not all staff and functions from a number of teams within CS. The queries do not appear to raise any fundamental difficulties.

17. Implementation

18. If members agree, then the transfer of services would be implemented from Monday 5 January 2009 although work would continue to ensure that the service transfers smoothly.

Corporate Priorities

19. The proposals made in this paper would allow a better contribution to delivering the corporate priority of 'improving the actual and perceived condition and appearance of the city's streets, housing estates, and publicly accessible spaces'.

Implications

20. Financial. The 9th May 2008 Urgency Committee report set out an expectation that £35k would be saved from the changes to Highways, Parking and Grounds Maintenance set out in this report. Proposals to make these savings will be developed during Phase 2 of the transfer as set out in paragraph 26, but are, as yet, unknown. Details of the savings will be then reported to the Neighbourhood Services EMAP in July 2009 for members to consider. These will be delivered as part of the 2009/10 budget. As set out in para 43, members have already taken a £30k saving from LCCS grounds maintenance budgets as part of the 2008/09 budget process in anticipation of these changes.
21. Human Resources (HR). Staff and their union representatives have been consulted on the proposed directorate changes in working arrangements and service delivery. There will be continued on-going consultation throughout the process. As a consequence of these changes, there is a need to review

and revise job descriptions for some Chief Officers and other related staff, which will be evaluated in line with the Council's Job Evaluation Scheme.

22. Equalities: None
23. Legal: The new arrangements will require amendment of the constitution in order to maintain alignment of operational management and Executive portfolios. The constitutional adjustments will ensure that officers within the remit of the Neighbourhood Services directorate report to the Executive Member Advisory Panel for Neighbourhood Services (EMAP). The changes relate to the transferring services and are to be found in Annex E. Delegated authority to amend the constitution is sought in the recommendations to allow these amendments to be implemented without further reference to the committee.
24. Crime and Disorder: None
25. Information Technology (IT): None
26. Property: None
27. Other: None

Risk Management

28. In compliance with the council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified are those which could lead to the inability to deliver services (Operational). Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk has been assessed at 8, placing the issue in the LOW category. This means that at this point the risks need only to be monitored as they do not provide a real threat to the achievement of the objectives of this report. Further clarification has been provided by this follow up report.

Recommendations

29. That members are requested:
 - a) to approve Phase One of the transfer of services and staff from City Strategy to Neighbourhood Services, and from Neighbourhood Services to LCCS as detailed at Annexes A – D in the original report.
 - b) to note that minor adjustment may be made as a result of operational experience.
 - c) to agree that a report on Phase Two for the Highways part of this plan be brought to Neighbourhood Services EMAP before the end of July 2009. This report will also detail how the anticipated £35k savings will be delivered in year.
 - d) to agree that the Head of Civic, Legal & Democratic Services be given delegated authority to amend the constitution to ensure that the executive

portfolios reflect the newly constituted lines of operational management within the effected directorates, as detailed in Annex E in the original report.

Reason: To progress the Directorate Reorganisation agreed by the Staffing Matters & Urgency Committee in May 2008.

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Report Approved **Date** 23/10/2008

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Legal: Quentin Baker, Head of Civic Legal & Democratic Services, Ext. 1004

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the authors of the report

Background Papers :

'Transfer of Services from City Strategy to Neighbourhood Services, and between Neighbourhood Services and Learning, Culture and Children's Services' – Paper to Staffing & Urgency Committee 6th November 2008.

Annexes:

Appendix 1 – Original report to 6 November 2008 Staffing Matters & Urgency Committee

Appendix 2 – Implementation Plan