

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL**

**REPORT**

To: GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE		Subject: DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION: CENTRAL AND LEGAL SERVICES DIVISIONS - PROPOSED INTERIM STRUCTURE
From: DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION		
Date: 11 January 1996	Ref: JOH/JF/AH	

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Policy & Resources Committee on 7 November approved the senior staff structure of the Administration Department. The purpose of this report is to outline, in as much detail as is possible at this time, the remaining staff structures proposed for the Legal and Central Services Divisions of the Department. In identifying staff requirements, every effort has been made to keep to a minimum the resources deployed consistent with full delivery of all services required by the Council. The following structures achieve significant staff savings when compared with the staffing establishment of the existing District and Regional Councils. It will be possible, through the proposed structures, to provide in full all services required by the Council only if comprehensive use is made of information technology and, for that reason, the following proposals include the provision that a portion of the savings achieved be deployed to expand, develop and adapt the IT resources which will be inherited by the Council in connection with these functions.

**2. Proposed Structure - Legal Services Division**

2.1 At this time it is not possible to calculate, in detail, the legal workload of North Lanarkshire Council. The proposals for the structure of the Legal Services Division at professional level are, accordingly, based on the assumption that the internal analysis carried out by the Director of Strathclyde Legal Services correctly assesses the number of professional staff required to cope with the normal legal workload for regional functions and that existing district councils have efficiently staffed their legal departments for normal workloads. On that basis, it is considered that a reduction in professional staff of 14.3% when compared to the establishment, relating to North Lanarkshire, of existing regional and district councils represents an acceptable balance between the need to ensure acceptable level of service and the opportunity to achieve savings arising from an aggregated establishment.

2.2 It is proposed that the professional staff be organised in three sections as shown in Appendices 1 (a) and 1 (b):-

Litigation and Advice Section consisting of one chief solicitor, three principal solicitors, two senior solicitors and four solicitors. Within this section there will be three sub-sections, one dealing with litigation, one with advice on ex-regional functions and one with advice on ex-district functions. Each sub-section will be headed by a principal solicitor and, of the two senior solicitors, one will be responsible mainly for carrying out ex-regional and the other for ex-district litigation. The four solicitors will provide general advice and litigation throughout the remit. As the group matures, expertise will be shared and developed and further internal shaping of responsibilities is anticipated.

A Property and Commercial Section consisting of one chief solicitor, two principal solicitors, three senior solicitors and six solicitors. A considerable workload is anticipated in relation to property conveyancing including matters arising from council house sales, commercial work associated with economic development, contracts, particularly in community care, and CCT consultancy and contract work.

A Licensing and District Court Section consisting of one chief solicitor, two principal solicitors and four solicitors. It is proposed that the two principal solicitors be responsible for licensing and district courts respectively. The Council has accepted the view that there should continue to be three District Courts and, on that basis, a legal assessor is assigned to each. One solicitor is considered sufficient to handle basic legal work associated with all licensing and not otherwise carried out by higher grades.

2.3 In accordance with Council policy, existing administrative and clerical staff will transfer at existing grades. No savings are here immediately identified and staff will be allocated to the three sections in the way which best utilises their expertise and corresponds with the needs of the service. A number of functions undertaken by the administrative sections of existing district councils will, in North Lanarkshire, be undertaken by the Legal Services Division. Those functions relate, principally, to licensing and district courts administration and staff will be deployed accordingly.

2.4 It is recommended that three legal trainee posts be created. This will ensure a ready source of qualified legal staff familiar with the service provision and general workings of North Lanarkshire Council. The service very quickly obtains value for money from the work trainees can undertake and, as a matter of good employment practice, the employment of trainees provides a commendable career progression for young people. To ensure good quality candidates, it is recommended that the trainee posts be advertised as soon as possible with a probable start date in the summer or early autumn. This would provide a first year saving of £12,000. It is proposed, also, that three solicitor posts presently vacant remain unfilled until the effect of overall work loads including the assimilation of Cumbernauld Development Corporation functions can be assessed. From this there is the potential of a one year - and possibly a permanent - saving of £59,000.

### 3. **Proposed Structure - Central Services Division**

3.1 As indicated in the report approved in November 1995, the Central Services Division is responsible for a range of functions including committee services, members services and general administrative services. The staffing, and to the extent at present possible, the proposed structure for the Division is shown in Appendices 2 and 3 respectively.

3.2 The Council has yet to determine its scheme of administration and it is likely that although progress will be made over the next few Committee cycles, the final committee structure will be fully identified early in the first operational year. Preliminary indications do, however, confirm the previous estimate that the section will require to service not less than 350 - 400 meetings annually. It is proposed that staff responsible for the administration of the Council's decision making process, including the operation of all Committees, Sub-Committees, Appeal Committees and Complaints Review bodies as well as the provision of full support to Members representing the Council on Joint Boards, Joint Committees and other outside organisations, be organised in three sections as follows;

Committee Section 1 which will have responsibility for the operation of the Education, General Purposes, Housing, Personnel Services and Social Work Committees and for all related and ancillary meetings and other work. This Section will have the additional responsibility of providing all necessary services to the North Lanarkshire Children's Panel Advisory Committee and the Children's Panel throughout North Lanarkshire;

Committee Section 2 which will have responsibility for the Construction Services, Economic Development, Environmental Services, Leisure Services and Planning and Development Committees. In addition to work ancillary to those Committees, this Section will have additional responsibilities for safety of sports grounds legislation and for co-ordinating and keeping under review the Council's provision of support to and liaison with Community Councils; and

A Core Section which will have responsibility for meetings of the Council itself, the Policy and Resources Committee and the Finance Committee. This Section will be responsible for general minutes control, for the development of a full text retrieval system covering all decisions of the Council, for all issues relating to Members' interests, for central retention and maintenance of records of all appointments to outside bodies and of all delegations made by the Council, for regular review of the Council's Standing Orders for Committees and Sub-Committees, for all access to information procedures as affecting meetings and for elections. In addition, this section will be responsible for the Department's interest in ensuring that the Council discharges the new statutory obligations for the preservation and management of records transferred to, created or acquired by or placed in the custody of the Council. As noted at the last meeting of the Council, it is likely that North Lanarkshire will be responsible for the conduct of elections in one European constituency and five Parliamentary constituencies in addition to the sixty nine local electoral divisions of North Lanarkshire. It is, accordingly, imperative that the Council be always in a state of readiness to conduct elections and it will be the responsibility also of this Section to provide, in terms of the Council's policy, such assistance as is required to community councils in connection with conduct of community council elections. Ancillary to the responsibility for the Policy and Resources and Finance Committees, this Section will be responsible, also, for operation of the legislation covering the control of public processions and for co-ordinating support to the Council's representatives on the Joint Police, Fire and Valuation Boards and the Purchasing Joint Committee.

- 3.3 Having regard to the increased responsibilities of Members, it is necessary to increase the resources devoted to Members' support. It is proposed that Members' support be delivered by a discrete group of staff with responsibility for the provision of full secretarial services to the Convener, other Members holding Council offices including the Leader, Depute Leader and all Chairs and Vice Chairs as well as all other Members. Secretarial services will include, as well as services for correspondence both internal and external, other administrative support, including the arranging of surgeries and diary assistance. The resources required by Members will include access to a wide range of local government information and it is proposed that the resources of the previous authorities, insofar as inherited by North Lanarkshire, be concentrated to form the basis of a Local Government Library to be located adjacent to the Members' accommodation. Development and general oversight of the Library would be within the remit of the Council's main Library Service through the Director of Leisure Services and, by way of that Library, it will be possible to provide Members with research and information facilities. Under the auspices of the Convener and in accordance with the decisions of the Civic Functions Group, this group of officers will be responsible also for the co-ordination of civic hospitality. Existing local authorities within North Lanarkshire have developed twinning arrangements and, while the Council has as yet made no decision in this regard, it is proposed that this Members Services Unit should be in a position to support the Convener and all other Members in connection with twinning arrangements approved by the Council.

3.4 The Central Services Division is responsible, also, for a range of other functions including common services to the Council's headquarters and to some of the other major offices of the Council. Those services, which include security, typing and word processing, printing and reprographics will be supervised by the Administrative Services Section. Crucially, those services include also, reception and telephone switchboard facilities. Both reception and telephone switchboard services will be of vital importance - particularly in the early life of the Council - in reducing public confusion over reorganisation and in helping the people of North Lanarkshire to gain ready access to the services provided by the Council. The current proposals proceed on the assumption that these duties - particularly within the Council headquarters and the present headquarters of, respectively, Monklands and Cumbernauld and Kilsyth District Councils - will extend to the provision of general information on the Council's services and be a point of contact for Council services locally. The provisional staffing structures for those services in the present HQ buildings at Coatbridge and Cumbernauld are shown in Appendix 3 and the staff proposed for the delivery of all common services are included in the staff list at Appendix 2. Detailed proposals on the organisation and deployment of those staff will be the subject of a future report.

A further vital area of activity is the work of the Registration/Area Offices and the Administrative Services Section will be responsible, also, for oversight of this work. Within North Lanarkshire there are nine full time registrars' offices and one part time office. The majority of these offices carry out both registration functions and education functions in the servicing of attendance committees and the administration of clothing and footwear grants. In addition, in the majority of those offices, it is possible for the public to pay Council Tax although it is understood that this facility is subject to review. In total, these local offices have a staff compliment of 35 officers and the operation and future development of this network of local offices will be an area of considerable importance to the Council. A further report on the staffing and structure of registration/area offices, which will take account of alterations in education responsibilities to accord with changes in local government boundaries, will be submitted to a future meeting. For that reason the staffing and structures of the Registration/Area Offices are not covered by this report.

It is recommended that the Administrative Services Section undertake responsibility for, also, property enquiries, for corporate monitoring of the Capital Programme and, with regard to the Department of Administration, for budgetary matters and departmental health and safety.

#### 4. **Word Processing/Typing**

Analysis of the staff transferring from the existing regional and district councils leads to the preliminary conclusion that the department may be under resourced in word processing and typing. Given that, it is proposed that, apart from the necessary secretarial support to the Heads of Legal and Central Services, the Central and Legal Services Divisions, as well as the other departments based within the Civic Centre, Motherwell, be served, initially from a centralised typing and word processing resource. The position in this regard will, however, be kept under review and a report detailing the proposed arrangements for word processing/typing will be submitted to a future meeting.

#### 5. **Necessary Ancillary Developments**

As indicated in Paragraph 1.1 above, it is accepted that the service required by the Council can be delivered only if the potential of information technology is fully exploited. For that reason it is recommended that, of the savings achieved, the sum of £20,000 be allocated in financial year 1996/97 for the expansion, development and adaptation of information technology resources. With particular regard to the Legal Services Division, it is proposed, also, that from the savings achieved the sum of £20,000 in that financial year be allocated to a discrete budget from which can be funded the purchase, on an ad hoc basis, of external specialist legal advice.

6. **Comparison with Staff Transfer Order**

The total number of posts transferring to the Administration Department (under exception of Registration staff and of the Personnel Division) is 190. The total salary costs of those posts has been calculated at £ 2,946,268. This compares with 168 posts in the proposed structure, the total salary costs of which have been calculated at £2,541,154. The proposed structure represents a considerable saving when compared to the costs of the establishment of the previous authorities. In addition to that saving, the opportunity has been taken to divert resources to provide two areas of growth. One is the enhancement to the support available to Elected Members and the second is a facility for monitoring delivery of the Capital Programmes.

7. **Recommendation**

7.1 The Committee is requested to approve the foregoing structures and recommendations.

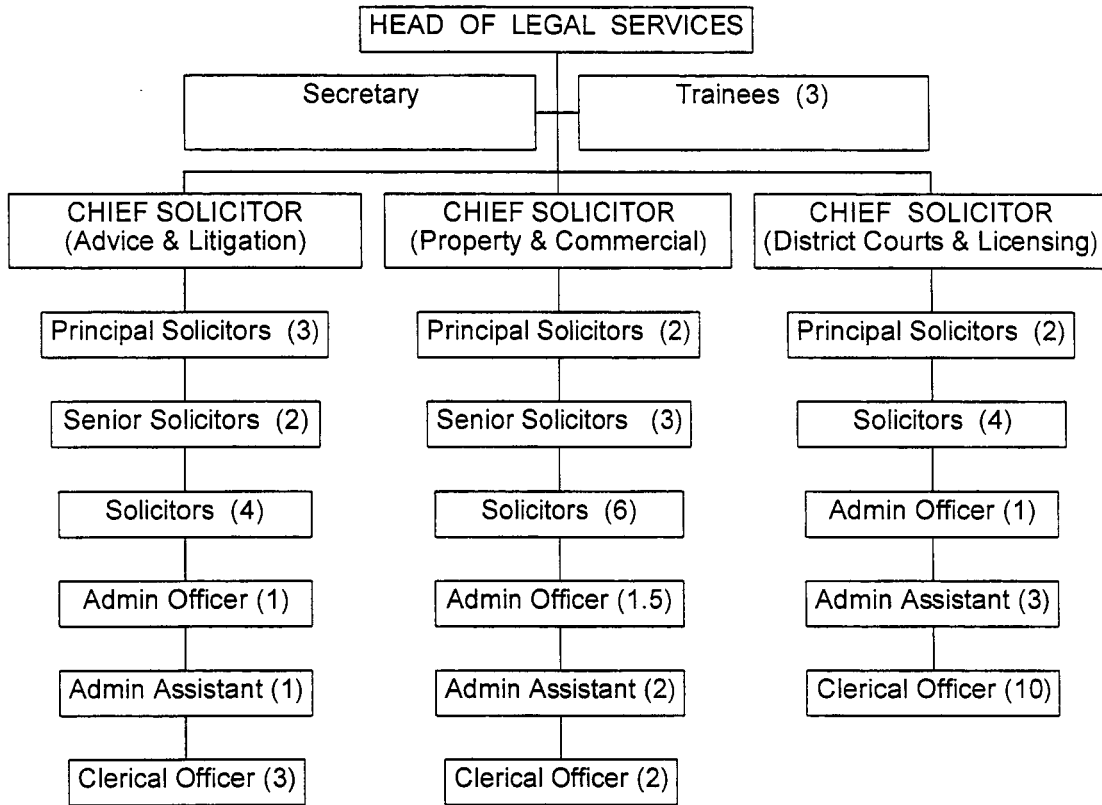
  
Director of Administration

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**LEGAL SERVICES DIVISION****Structure : Salary Costs**

	<b>Grade</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<i>Head of Legal Services</i>			53,835
<i>Chief Solicitor</i>	PO22	3 x 33,060	99,180
<i>Principal Solicitor</i>	PO14	7 x 27,477	194,925
<i>Senior Solicitor</i>	PO6	5 x 22,656	122,190
<i>Solicitor</i>	PO1	14 x 19,677	291,159
<i>Administrative Officer</i>	AP4	1.5 x 15,438	23,157
<i>Administrative Officer</i>	AP3	2 x 13,584	27,168
<i>Senior Administrative Assistant</i>	AP2	3 x 12,165	36,495
<i>Legal Trainees</i>	AP1/2	3 x 11,052	33,156
<i>Secretary</i>	AP1	1 x 11,052	11,052
<i>Administrative Assistant</i>	AP1	3 x 11,052	33,156
<i>Senior Clerical Officer</i>	GS3	7 x 10,602	74,214
<i>Clerical Officer</i>	GS2	2 x 9,906	19,812
<i>Clerical Assistant</i>	GS1/2	6 x 9,906	59,436
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**LEGAL SERVICES DIVISION**



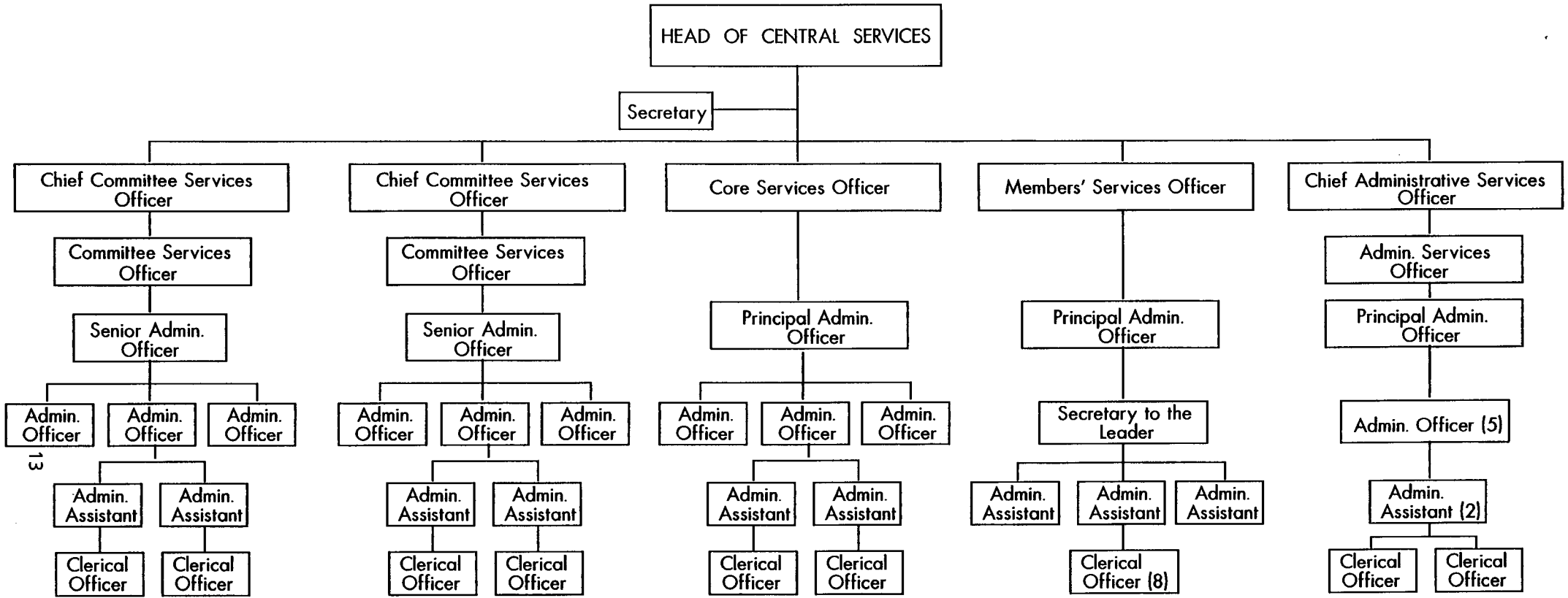
## CENTRAL SERVICES DIVISION

## Structure: Salary Costs

	Grade	£	£
Head of Central Services			53,835
Chief Committee Services Officer	PO18	2 x 30,132	60,264
Chief Administrative Services Officer	PO18	1 x 30,132	30,132
Members' Services Officer	PO14	1 x 27,477	27,477
Core Services Officer	PO14	1 x 27,477	27,477
Committee Services Officer	PO11	2 x 25,614	51,228
Administrative Services Officer	PO11	1 x 25,614	25,614
Principal Administrative Officer	P04	3 x 21,393	64,179
Senior Administrative Officer	AP5/P02	2 x 17,667	35,334
Secretary to the Leader of the Council	AP4	1 x 15,438	15,438
Administrative Officers	AP4	18 x 15,438	277,884
Council Officer	AP2	1 x 12,165	12,165
Senior Administrative Assistants	AP2	2 x 12,165	24,330
Administrative Assistants	AP1	14 x 11,052	154,728
Secretary	AP1	1 X 11,052	11,052
Depute Council Officers	AP1	2 X 11,052	22,104
Chief Security Officer	GS3	1 x 10,602	10,602
Senior Clerical Officer	GS3	3 x 10,602	31,806
Assistant Council Officers/Chauffeurs	GS3	2 x 10,602	21,204
Clerical Officer	GS2	38 x 9,906	376,428
Clerical Assistant	GS1	2 x 9,906	19,812
Security Officers	G1	5 x 10,000	50,000
Building Maintenance Officers		4 x 9,800	39,200
Commissionaires	GS1/2	2 x 10,413	20,826
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			1,463,119
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CENTRAL SERVICES DIVISION



LOCAL OFFICE STRUCTURE

