

REPORT

To: GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE POLICY AND RESOURCES (PERSONNEL) SUB-COMMITTEE		Subject: DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION: CENTRAL SERVICES DIVISION – STRUCTURE REVIEW
From: DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION		
Date: 14 March 2007	Ref: JAF/IL	

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to make recommendations following a review of the establishment structure within the Central Services Division of the Department of Administration.

2. Background

2.1 In broad terms the Central Services Division covers

- **Administrative Services:-** Responsible for the Council's headquarters including common services such as switchboard, security, building maintenance, communications etc, for the registration service and the network of eight Area Registration Offices, for the property enquiry service, for divisional staffing and budgetary matters, for printing and reprographics, for IT support including IT support for elected members and for managing and co-ordinating, under the auspices of the Head of Central Services, the role of the Administration Department in the organisation of, preparation for and conduct of elections;
- **Committee Services:-** Responsibility for the Council decision-making processes covering the meetings of the Council, Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups, Scrutiny Panels, appointments to outside bodies, support to the Children's Panel system, Safeguarders arrangements, tenders received under Contract Standing Orders, support to the Prison Visiting Committees, Community Councils, delegated powers to officers and the publication of agendas, reports and minutes electronically as well as in hard copy in accordance with statutory requirements;
- **Members' Services:-** The provision of secretarial support to elected members, the Members' Library, civic arrangements, twinning and hospitality, dedicated support to the Council's principal office bearers and the provision of a Council Officer service.

2.2 A full Best Value review of the Members' Services Section and the services provided to members of the Council is currently being undertaken and the outcome of that review will be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

2.3 The establishment of the Central Services Division was approved in February 2003. Subsequently, with the introduction of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act, the structure was reviewed to provide, without additional budgetary allocation, a resource to meet the Council's obligations under that Act. Thus, through reconfiguration of the service, there was created the posts of Corporate Freedom of Information Officer and Assistant Corporate Freedom of Information Officer. It was, at that time, acknowledged

that it would not be possible to anticipate the resources required for Freedom of Information and, while those posts are principally devoted to Freedom of Information duties, they are located within one of the two Committee Services teams and discharge, also, responsibilities with regard to the Council decision-making processes.

2.4 In the period since August 2004 there have been a number of significant developments including

- Two years' experience of the operation of the Freedom of Information Act and the outcome of a review of the discharge of the Council's responsibilities under that Act;
- An increase in the volume and complexity of election related work;
- An evaluation of the property enquiry service in light of decreasing usage;
- A review of the administrative services provided by the Central Services Division;
- The enactment of the Police, Public Order and Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2006 which places new duties on the Council with regard to marches and parades;
- The transfer, from the Department of Finance to the Department of Administration of responsibility for corporate Data Protection functions in terms of the Data Protection Policy approved by the Council and against a growing scrutiny of Data Protection arrangements generally.

In light of these changes it is necessary that the structure of the Central Services Division be, now, again reviewed.

3. **Freedom of Information**

3.1 As is identified by the review of the Council's Freedom of Information procedures, the procedures themselves have proved sound and operable, but the volume of work exceeds that which can be accommodated within existing resources while complying with statutory timescales. It is, accordingly, necessary that additional resources be identified.

4. **Marches and Parades**

As previously reported to Committee, the amendment of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 by the Police, Public Order and Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2006 and the issue of statutory guidance by the Scottish Ministers imports a range of new responsibilities on the Council with regard to marches and parades including

- Publication of events;
- Community consultation;
- Precursory meetings with the police and organisers;
- Greater specification of factors to be taken into account in reaching decisions;
- Provision of 'one door approach';
- Exploration with organisers of possibility of reducing number of events or combining events;
- Debriefing meetings with organisers, representatives of the community, persons who have made representations and the police;
- Compilation of statistical returns for submission to the Scottish Executive.

These duties will require to be discharged at a senior level and appropriate provision requires to be made.

5. **Data Protection**

- 5.1 The Council, at its meeting on 15 February 2007, approved the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee that responsibility for the corporate Data Protection role, in terms of the Data Protection Policy approved by the Council, transfer from the Department of Finance to the Department of Administration. Provision requires to be made for the discharge of those responsibilities.

6. **Administrative Services**

- 6.1 As reported elsewhere in this agenda, a benchmarking and Best Value review of the administrative services provided by the Central Services Division has been undertaken and has identified the potential for restructuring to meet the changing needs of the Council and achieve increased efficiencies. It is considered that it is opportune to give effect to those findings – and, in particular, to reconfigure two posts of Administrative Officer to confirm the responsibility for employees within the sections which report to them and the financial responsibility in the requirement to contribute to setting and monitoring the budget of the Central Services Division and ensuring value for money and effective utilisation of those financial resources. It is considered appropriate, also, in light of the findings following the reappraisal of the provision of the property enquiry service to give effect to the recommendation regarding future provision of the service.

7. **Elections**

- 7.1 The volume of work associated with elections is increasing dramatically to the extent that a number of Councils have established a dedicated election team. It is not considered appropriate that this be done at this stage – rather that responsibility for co-ordinating the departmental input to elections remain with the Administrative Services Section. It is, however, considered necessary that a post be identified with specific responsibility for administrative duties in relation to legislation, records and contributing to setting and monitoring the electoral services budgets and ensuring value for money and effective utilisation of these financial resources. That post will report direct to the Chief Administrative Services Manager with attendant responsibility also for employees in conjunction with the electoral processes.

8. **Proposals**

- 8.1 To address the changing responsibilities with regard to Data Protection, marches and parades and the need to devote increasing resources to Freedom of Information, it is proposed that a Civic Governance Unit be created, headed by a Civic Governance Manager at grade NLC16. It is proposed that this section comprise, in addition to the Civic Governance Manager, the Corporate Freedom of Information Officer, the Assistant Corporate Freedom of Information Officer, two Administrative Officers and one Administrative Assistant and that this section assume responsibility for, also, the central responsibilities in terms of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers legislation; the Register of Tenders; the co-ordination of the activities of the Council with regard to approaches received from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman – an area in which there is evidence of significant increasing activity; the Council's responsibilities with regard to Ethical Standards legislation; the Register of Political Restricted Posts; provision and co-ordination of the publication of information on the Council's decision-making processes and the membership of the Council and oversight and control of the use of the meeting accommodation and equipment within the Council's headquarters including maintenance of the master meetings diary. It is proposed, also, that there be delegated to the Civic Governance Manager power to discharge the Council's responsibilities on receipt of any requirement of the Council to review its actions and decisions in relation to initial

determination of a Freedom of Information request. It is further proposed that the job descriptions of the Corporate Freedom of Information Officer and the Assistant Corporate Freedom of Information Officer be extended to include, also, the further responsibilities of the Civic Governance Section.

8.2 It is further proposed that the designation of the post of Administrative Officer (Committee Services) be altered to Administrative Officer (Committee and Civic Governance Services) and be extended to

- Make provision for those officers, as and when required, to attend and discharge responsibilities as clerk to such meetings as may from time to time be required;
- Cover appropriate duties with regard to the range of responsibilities of the Civic Governance Section.

8.3 It is proposed, also, to give effect to the recommendations arising from the review of Administrative Services and, in particular, to

- Delete the post of Chief Security Officer;
- Combine the printing and mail and portering units with additional responsibility for disposal of confidential papers;
- Agree in respect of the post of Principal Administrative Officer that a request by the post holder to retire from the services of the Council in the interests of the service be granted;
- Revise the job description of one of the two posts of Administrative Assistant to include election responsibilities.

9. Staffing Implications

9.1 Notwithstanding the increased range of functions being undertaken by the Division, the net effect of these proposals involves no change in overall staffing establishment. Within the Committee and Administrative Services Sections of the Central Services Division, as a result of the Job Evaluation exercise, a total of 32 posts were red circled. As a result of clarification following managers enquiry forms and as a result of the foregoing proposals, a number of these posts have been addressed. There remain, however, employees in 12 red circle full-time equivalent posts and further consideration will be given to those posts both in conjunction with future reviews of responsibilities and continued consideration of manager enquiry forms.

9.2 In connection with the increased responsibilities for marches and parades, additional resources amounting to £64,000 have been provided by the Scottish Executive by way of GAE. Additionally, in connection with the transfer of the Corporate Data Protection functions, the sum of £20,000 has been transferred from the budget of the Department of Finance to that of the Department of Administration.

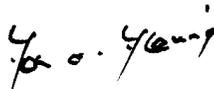
9.3 Attached, as an appendix to this report, are details of the available resources, the savings accrued from the post deletion and the staffing costs including the indicative costs of early *retiral*. The proposals show the potential for a saving of £46,519 – excluding one-off cost of pension lump sum added years – while making provision for the Central Services Division to undertake a range of new functions and responsibilities. Net savings will, however, be identifiable only following experience of the operation of the new procedures and identification of the additional costs necessarily incurred with regard to the extended processes in relation to public processions, but it is anticipated that the net savings will be not less than £35,000.

10. Resources

- 10.1 In connection with the increased responsibilities for marches and parades additional resources, by way of GAE, have been provided by the Scottish Executive amounting to £64,000.
- 10.2 In connection with the transfer of the Corporate Data Protection functions there has been transferred from the budget of the Department of Finance to that of the Department of Administration the sum of £20,000.
- 10.3 The deletion of the post of Chief Security Officer will accrue a saving at mid point on the salary scale with 25% oncosts of £20,231.
- 10.4 The proposals, accordingly, show the potential for savings of £46,519 while making provision for the Central Services Division to undertake a range of new functions and responsibilities. Net savings will, however, be identifiable only following experience of operation of the new procedures and identification of the additional costs necessarily incurred with regard to the extended processes in relation to public processions.

11. Recommendation

- 11.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the restructure proposals set out in this report.


Director of Administration

Members seeking further information on the contents of this report are asked to contact John Fleming, Head of Central Services on Extension 2228.

APPENDIX**Available Resources**

GAE increase in respect of additional responsibilities for marches and parades	£64,000.00
Budgetary transfer in connection with transfer of Corporate Data Protection functions	£20,000.00
Deletion of the post of Chief Security Officer	£20,231.00

Costs

Post of Corporate Governance Manager	£57,712.00
--------------------------------------	------------