

REPORT

To: POLICY & RESOURCES (FINANCE) SUB COMMITTEE		Subject: REVENUE SERVICES DIVISION MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILTY REVIEW
From: DIRECTOR OF FINANCE		
Date: 13 May 2005	Ref: BC/CC	

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to (1) seek a realignment of responsibilities within the Revenue Services Division of certain teams which would be more conducive to effective working practices, and (2) regularise the staff resources identified for the scanning pilot.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Policy & Resources (Finance) Sub Committee on 5 November 2002, approved a report 'Finance Department Structure Review'. Since that report there have been developments in the working practices both within the Revenue Services Division and in terms of the working relationships with other Departments and the public which necessitate a review of the existing arrangement.
- 2.2 The review concerns 3 areas where improvements in the management arrangements and staffing are considered necessary to the continued improvement of service delivery.
- a) Debtors Section & Debt Recovery Team
 - b) Administration Section
 - c) Scanning Pilot

3 Debtors Section & Debt Recovery Team

- 3.1 The structure review approved in 2002 provided for two sections within Revenue Services Division which were responsible for various aspects of the debtors system and functionality.
- 3.2 The Debtors Section comprised 5 posts, located at Park Street Motherwell, with responsibilities including system administration/development, payment allocation, training, issue of 1st Reminders and consequential enquiries and payment arrangements, departmental liaison etc. This section is responsible to the Expenditure & Controls Manager.
- 3.3 The Debt Recovery Team comprises 14 posts, located at Bron Way Cumbernauld, with responsibilities including system development, outstanding arrears recovery and consequential enquiries and monitoring of repayment arrangements, departmental liaison, etc. This section is responsible to the Income Manager.

- 3.4 It has become apparent that the separation of duties between the two teams has not been able to be operated as originally proposed. It has resulted in a degree of overlap which is confusing for both the customer and relevant departments. To resolve such difficulties it is proposed to merge the two teams and create a single team responsible for all aspects of the Council's debtor system. This will create a single point of contact and direction for the processing and recovery of debtor accounts and enhance the consistency and level of service which is provided to all users of the system.
- 3.5 In reviewing the functions of the sections it is proposed to transfer a post of Debtors Data Input Assistant (GS1/3) to the Cash Team, located at Park Street Motherwell, along with the respective duties for payment allocation as these functions are complimentary. The Cash Team are responsible to the Income Manager.

The remaining 4 posts of Debtors Team Leader (AP5), Debtors Administrative Assistant (AP1/2), and Debtors Data Input Assistant x 2 (GS1/3) would be merged with the Debt Recovery Team located at Bron Way Cumbernauld. The expanded Debt Recovery Team would continue to be responsible to the Income Manager.

- 3.6 The proposed structure is reflected in Appendix 2. The post of Debt Recovery Supervisor (PO2) would be expanded to include direct operational responsibility for the staff and functions transferred from the Debtors Section and the Debtors Team Leader would report to the Debt Recovery Supervisor.
- 3.7 There are no proposed changes to the grading of staff involved, however, each post is subject to the Council's Job Evaluation Scheme. The Council's normal guidelines would apply in terms of staff who are relocated and opportunities for the redeployment of staff where appropriate would be considered.

4 Administration Section

- 4.1 The structure review approved in 2002 provided for an Administration Section comprising 9 posts within the Revenue Services Division which reported to the Head of Revenue Services.
- 4.2 The Administration Section provides a range of functions centrally for each of the three sections within Revenue Services. The functions include general reception and mail handling, absence and flexi time monitoring and reporting, payslip distribution, Council Tax and Creditor scanning etc.
- 4.3 To ensure an appropriate level of operational management of the section, it is proposed to transfer the managerial responsibility of the Administration Section to the Expenditure & Controls Manager. The Administration Section would continue to be based within Park Street Motherwell and provide a range of services to each of the 3 sections within Revenue Services Division.
- 4.4 There are no proposed changes to the grading of staff involved, however, each post is subject to the Council's Job Evaluation Scheme.

5 Scanning Pilot

- 5.1 The Council operated a pilot system to improve the service provided to departments for accessing invoices to support their management control of expenditure. Previous practice was to externally microfilm invoices through a private contractor, however, this meant that invoice details were not available until 3 months after payment.
- 5.2 The pilot introduced Document Imaging, which enabled creditor invoices to be scanned in-house. This now means that departments are now able to have 'drill down' access to invoice images within 4 weeks of the payment being processed. A review is currently being undertaken aimed at reducing even further the period for access.

- 5.3 The pilot was conducted using temporary staff sourced from an employment agency. Whilst this provided a flexible opportunity to resource the initial pilot, the use of agency staff is significantly expensive when compared to in-house provision.
- 5.4 Currently within the Administration Section, there are two GS1/2 posts, which process the document imaging for the Council Tax system. It is proposed to increase these posts to 4 GS1/2's to create a generic team to include the scanning of creditor invoices. Based in the midpoint of GS1/2, this would cost an additional £30,000 per annum (including on-costs) for the two additional posts.
- 5.5 The funding of this proposal would be met from the transfer of the existing revenue budget for microfilming of £16,000 plus the transfer of a vacant GS1/2 post within the Headquarters Team.
- 5.6 The two GS1/2 posts would be subject to an open recruitment exercise in accordance with the normal Personnel procedures.

6 Corporate Considerations

- 6.1 The proposal has been fully discussed with Personnel Services and the Trade Unions
- 6.2 The funding for the additional two GS1/2 posts can be contained within the resources identified in paragraph 5.5.

7 Recommendation

The Committee is asked to;

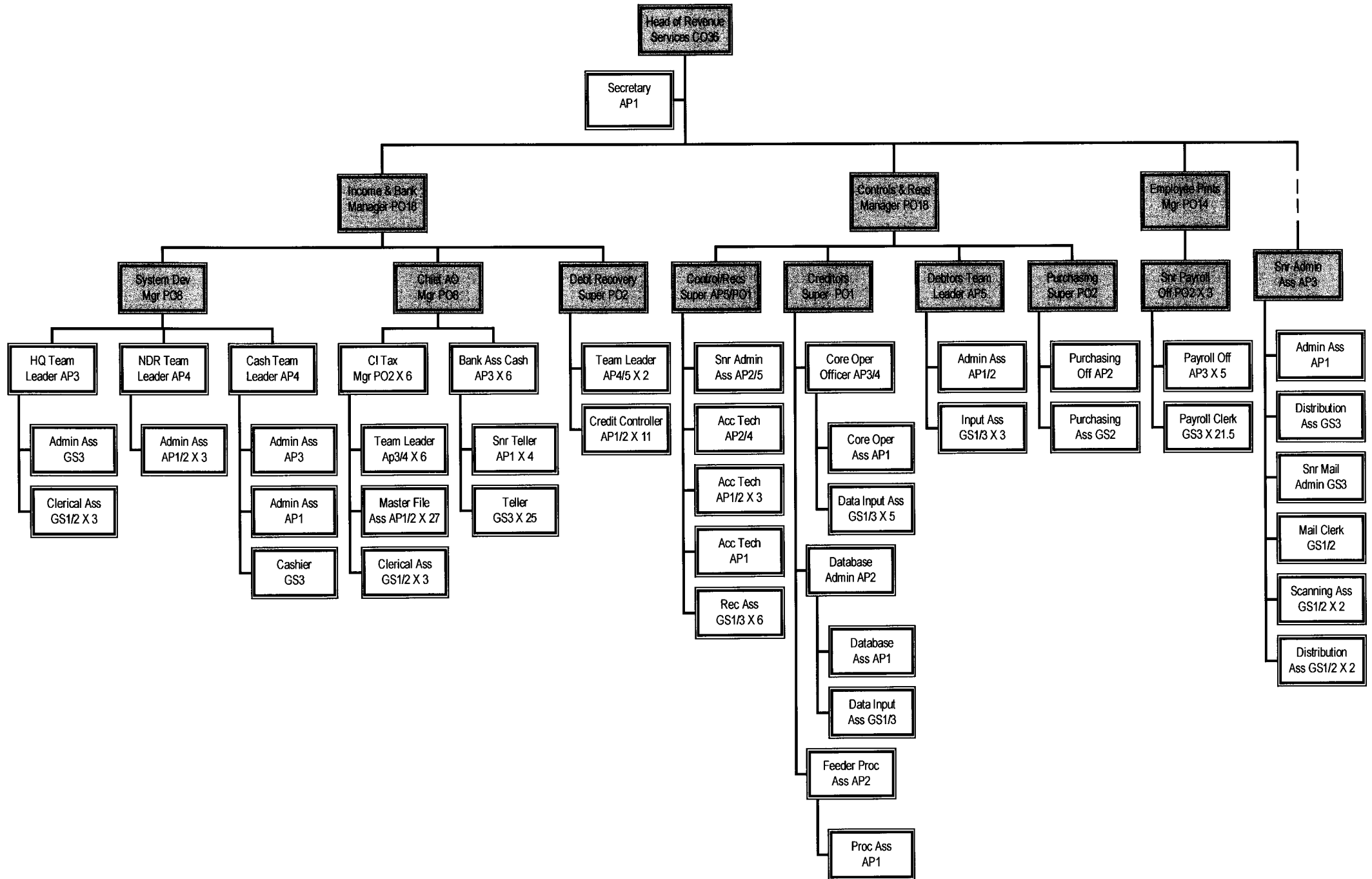
- 7.1 Approve the transfer of the Debtor's Section and alteration of managerial responsibility as outlined in Section 3.
- 7.2 Approve the transfer of the Administration Section and alteration of managerial responsibility as outlined in Section 4.
- 7.3 Approve the transfer and re-designation of a GS1/2 post and creation of one GS1/2 post as outlined in Section 5.
- 7.4 Approve the virement of £16,000 as outlined in Section 5.
- 7.5 Remit the report to the Policy & Resources (Finance) Sub-Committee.
- 7.6 Remit the report to the Policy & Resources (Personnel) Sub-Committee.



Director of Finance

Members wishing further information please contact Mr B Cook Head of Revenue Services,
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APPENDIX 1 - Existing Revenue Services Structure



APPENDIX 2 - Proposed Revenue Services Structure

