

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: COMMUNITY SERVICES: FUNCTIONS REMAINING WITH THE COUNCIL
Meeting: FALKIRK COUNCIL
Date: 27 April 2011
Author: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members will recall previous reports concerning the management structure of the Council and the fact that a decision in respect of those functions within Community Services would be taken once a conclusion was reached in respect of a Trust. As Members are aware, Council agreed in December 2010 to the creation of Falkirk Community Trust. Work is progressing well on the Trust with the intended date of implementation being 1 July 2011; an update on this is the subject of a separate report to Council.
- 1.2 This report outlines the functions of Community Services which will remain with the Council and makes recommendations on where they best fit within the Council's approved management structure.

2. COMMUNITY SERVICES FUNCTIONS REMAINING WITH THE COUNCIL

- 2.1 Of the c700 employees currently based within Community Services, c230 will remain employed by the Council. These employees work in the following functions:
- Community Learning & Development (CLD)
This function works with people of all ages to promote achievement through learning and capacity building. There are 3 main areas of work within CLD including:
 - Youth learning – This engages with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and helps them to gain a voice, influence and place in society.
 - Adult learning – This aims to raise standards of achievement in learning for adults through community based lifelong learning opportunities, incorporating the core skills of literacy, numeracy, communication, working with others and problem solving, as well as IT skills.
 - Capacity building – This helps communities to build their capacity for achievement and help communities to plan for the future, by enabling people to develop confidence, understanding and skills in influencing decisions. This includes the management of Community Centres.
- CLD is managed on the basis of a learning community model with generic teams being linked to school cluster areas providing the full range of CLD services.

- **Library Support for Schools**
This team work in partnership with Education Services to provide resources, information and advice in order to support the curriculum and enrich the learning experiences of pupils.
- **Community Halls**
These provide opportunities for recreation and other community activities. Community Services directly manage 5 community halls whilst the remaining 20 are managed by autonomous, voluntary management committees. The Service also provides caretakers who have key holding duties, cleaning and other related responsibilities, which vary depending on the size of the hall. Support is also provided to ensure the halls remain 'wind and watertight'.
- **Parks & Play**
A single officer works with other Services to ensure parks and play are developed and enhanced . Work is also undertaken in respect of engaging with the community and working in partnership with 'Friends of Parks' groups.
- **Bereavement Services.**
This service provides all Council run cemetery and cremation services across the area of the Council.

2.2 Members will recall that in reaching a decision to implement the Trust, it was agreed by Council in December 2010 that Bereavement Services (with c7 employees) would be transferred to Corporate & Neighbourhood Services. This will be implemented on inception of the Trust.

2.3 In respect of the remaining functions which will be retained within the Council, considerable work has been undertaken to review and consider the options available to ensure continued delivery of efficient and effective services. To do this, I have given consideration to comments received from officers based within these functions. I have also considered the comments received from the consultation on the review of the management structure, where consideration was given to splitting CLD across different Services. In addition, Corporate Management Team (CMT) has also discussed the options in detail, to ensure any proposals are 'fit for purpose'.

3. PROPOSED CHANGES

3.1 In making proposals for change, I have been mindful to consider the need to ensure that there is a clear business link between the functions and the Services to which they are transferred. It is equally important that any change provides on-going opportunities to further develop the services the functions deliver, making best use of resources and avoiding duplication. I have also taken into account the need to ensure any changes can be made within existing budget.

3.2 With this in mind, I would make the following proposals in respect of each of the functions being considered.

Community Learning & Development

- 3.3 It is proposed that Community Learning & Development (CLD) should be retained as a single unit and managed within Education Services. Since being placed within Community Services, CLD has gone from strength to strength, with impressive HMIE reports on the progress made by the CLD team. In this respect, it would be appropriate to maintain CLD together as a single team as this would allow continuity of service and continuation of the good work the team are doing to develop and enhance the quality of services. It is also worth noting that during the consultation on options for the management structure, very strong views were received from a number of officers that the best and most effective way to deliver the services of CLD was to retain it as a single unit.
- 3.4 It is also clear that CLD has a number of links with Education Services and indeed, was previously part of Education Services some years ago. The aim of both is very much linked with learning and development and there are already a number of partnerships between Education and CLD. There is also scope for this to further develop, in order to enhance the positive outcomes for children, young people and their families. It may also assist with future inspections as HMIE are looking to move to an integrated model for inspecting schools and CLD. With this in mind, it would seem appropriate that CLD be integrated within Education Services.

Library Support for Schools

- 3.5 Library Support for Schools already works in partnership with Education Services and it is proposed that this is now integrated within Education Services. It already provides resources, information and advice to support the curriculum and it would be appropriate for this to continue in a more integrated way. Equally, this function has very limited links with any other Service of the Council and as such, this seems the most appropriate option for the function.

Community Halls

- 3.6 Whilst Community Halls are managed separately from the Community Centres which are based within the CLD team, there are clearly links between the two. Irrespective of Members' decision in respect of CLD, the most appropriate option for Community Halls would be to integrate them within CLD. This would ensure that effective capacity building would continue to be fully delivered by CLD. This in turn would allow the team to promote community access to such facilities and develop management efficiencies through integration at an operational level.

Parks & Play

- 3.7 In respect of Parks & Play, it is proposed that this be integrated within Corporate & Neighbourhood Services. Given the work of the parks & play team within Community Services, this proposal ensures that the function will continue to develop in a Service which has core responsibility for estate management. This in turn will allow the service disciplines to be aligned and developed in the future.
- 3.8 These proposals would result in c220 employees being transferred to Education Services; the majority of whom (c180) are already managed within Community Learning & Development. The remaining employees would be transferred to Corporate & Neighbourhood Services.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Subject to Council approval, the proposals presented to Members will be shared with employees and Trade Unions. This will enable discussions to take place on the transfer of the functions. Implementation plans will also be developed in consultation with employees. The aim will be to ensure implementation of the changes as smoothly as possible, with minimal if any, disruption to services, service users and employees, whilst ensuring compliance with good HR practice. In some cases, this may require a change of work location and/or a change of line manager.
- 4.2 Where the changes, by necessity, result in jobs being amended to accommodate the integration of services, the relevant job descriptions will be re-designed and appropriately graded to ensure individuals undertaking these jobs are being paid the appropriate salary. This is in line with normal practice in situations involving changes such as those being proposed.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is anticipated that the costs associated with the proposals can be contained within existing budgets. As detailed above, where the responsibilities of existing posts have been amended due to the integration of teams, these posts will be reviewed and re-graded to ensure individuals continue to receive the appropriate grade for the post. This may incur some additional cost but this will be limited. In addition, there may be some property related costs associated with the work place changes, but again should be limited.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is recommended that Council:
- a) Approves the proposed changes to the management arrangements of those functions of Community Services which will remain with the Council, as outlined in section 3 of the report;
 - b) Notes that an implementation plan will be developed in consultation with employees and Trade Unions, which will aim to ensure minimal disruption to services, service users and employees during implementation of the changes, whilst ensuring compliance with good HR practice.

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Date: 19 April 2011

Ref: KA/MP

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS - None