

7 August 2008

Dear Colleague

### **Re: Consultation on the Proposed Senior Management Structure**

Further to my communication of the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2008, I am writing to provide information in response to the initial employee feedback on the proposed structure. I hope that this update will provide further clarity on some of the issues that have been most often raised in the first two weeks of the consultation exercise.

The newly appointed Chief Executive, George Garlick, has welcomed the positive and constructive comments that have been put forward to date, and hopes that colleagues will take the opportunity to respond before the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2008 should they not yet have taken the opportunity to do so.

It is recognised that this may be an unsettling time for people, and that individuals will be keen to know the detail behind the proposal put forward. We will provide further information in the coming weeks in response to any further questions that you may raise. However this initial consultation exercise may not be able to provide all of the detail that individuals may wish to receive, for the reasons outlined below.

### **Purpose of the Exercise**

The consultation exercise does not at this stage seek to provide information around how individual employees and teams will be affected. It is also not possible to address all of the issues raised, for example questions have been put forward that seek to understand:

- Geographical working arrangements
- How links with partner agencies will work with the structure
- How links with the Town and Parish Councils will operate
- The plan for Access to Services
- How Support Services will be delivered.

Further proposals on these issues will only be made once other key decisions have been made by the Council.

What this exercise does seek to achieve is to provide the Cabinet with an informed view from the workforce on the proposal, to enable a decision to be taken on what the functions will be within each Service Grouping. In light of that information, also to gain agreement on the nature of the Directors' posts in order to fill these posts at the earliest opportunity.

## **Heads of Service Proposals**

It has been extremely valuable and very positive to receive a large number of comments from colleagues on the proposals for the Heads of Service roles. In light of these comments we will take a closer look at these posts, and move to a further period of consultation specifically on the Heads of Service posts. The feedback received to date will help to further shape and develop the 'model' (the way that these jobs are designed and link with each other, and other jobs in the structure) for these critical roles for the new Unitary Authority.

In addition it will be of value to consider the viewpoints of the Work Stream leads (The group leaders who have been progressing Local Government Review service design work) in terms of how their thinking to date relates to the final picture for the posts at a Head of Service level. We will let people know as soon as possible how we plan to do this.

The 'model' for Heads of Service roles is being influenced by a number of broad aims. For example:

- The desire for the roles to be customer focussed and developed from a service delivery perspective
- A desire to reduce the levels of management in the organisation to enable maximum flexibility, and encourage individual responsibility
- To promote and facilitate joined up working across the Council.

Early questions have been asked around:

- Why so many Heads of Service?
- Why do the new proposals simply replicate the existing County Council's Heads of Service posts?

To provide some context the following information may be of assistance in giving clarity these questions:

- It is expected that any final proposal for Heads of Service in the new council will have between 30 and 35 posts
- At present there are 50 posts called 'Head of Service' in the County Council alone
- There are a further 7 management teams across the District Councils comprising of Directors and Heads of Service
- Each of the existing councils use different terminology to describe their senior posts, and each has a different pay structure for these senior positions.

Going forward, any new jobs entitled 'Head of Service' may well be very different to what is currently understood by that terminology across the eight councils. In this regard the Head of Service jobs will be evaluated to create a new structure and new senior pay system that is based on the comparability of the new jobs with each other, and links to the rest of the new organisation.

## **Points of Clarification**

Appendix one highlights the most common themes that have emerged in this early stage of consultation. Alongside these themes some notes of clarification are provided that seeks to answers the questions around where it is proposed that some services are placed, along with some rationale as to why that is the proposal.

## **Timetable for Decisions**

The current consultation process will conclude on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2008. It is intended that the feedback upon the proposals will then be put forward for Cabinet consideration on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 2008. Cabinet will be asked to consider the final structural arrangements in relation to the Directors' and Assistant Chief Executive posts, in line with current constitutional decision making arrangements.

As previously highlighted, the Head of Service proposals will be subject to a further round of consultation that will enable those potentially affected by any changes to have an extended period to influence over the future shape of these roles.

Can I remind you that it is still possible for you to send in your views on the proposed structure before the closing date of 18<sup>th</sup> August 2008.

KIM JOBSON  
Head of Strategic Human Resources.

THEME	RESPONSE
<p><b>Housing</b> – why are different the functions for Strategic Housing and the Housing Landlord in different corporate directorates rather than being together into one area?</p>	<p>There are two reasons for the separate Strategic Housing and Housing Landlord functions. First, housing led regeneration will be critical to the future economic development planning for County Durham. Therefore, it needs to be at the heart of the proposed Development Directorate.</p> <p>Secondly, direct Council housing provision continues in only two of the current districts. It would seem sensible to maintain a degree of separation between these direct providers and the strategic/commissioning role. Therefore, Housing Landlord is proposed within the Neighbourhood Services Directorate.</p>
<p><b>Waste</b> – why are the functions for Waste Disposal and Waste Collection not combined into one Directorate?</p>	<p>Waste Disposal is essentially the process of commissioning the future disposal systems for County Durham – as such it will be a key strategic issue for the new Council. This is the reason that the activity has been placed in the Development area, rather than alongside Waste Collection in Neighbourhood Services. This directorate is proposed to be focused on more service delivery matters.</p>
<p><b>Culture, Leisure and Tourism</b> – there seem to be some clear links between services like libraries, culture, museums, tourism and leisure. Why are they not aligned together more closely, rather than located across three directorates?</p>	<p>The proposal seeks to place local leisure facilities within Neighbourhood Services to benefit from the locality management focus of the service groupings.</p>
<p><b>Other Functions</b> – questions have been raised about the future location of a number of other functions – for example, Building Control, Bereavement Services, Equalities, Building Services, Environmental Policy.</p>	<p>Building Control – is aligned in Development. Bereavement Services – is aligned in Neighbourhood Services. Equalities – is aligned to the Asst. Chief Executive Building Services &amp; Environmental Policy – aligned in Neighbourhood Services.</p>
<p><b>Heads of Service</b> – why are there many different Heads of Service across the proposed structure?</p>	<p>Currently there are 50 'Head of Service' posts in the County Council alone – the new structure currently proposes between 30 and 35 posts.</p>
<p><b>Coordination across the Directorates</b> – how can we make sure that the proposed Directorates will work together effectively and be able to respond to the needs of local communities?</p>	<p>Ensuring the coherent working of the new Council is the key task of the new Corporate Management Team and the extended management team. The CMT will work as a single corporate unit, not as single directorates coming together for a meeting. Responsiveness to the communities of County Durham is a key driver for the new Council.</p>