

APPENDIX B : SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION AND RESPONSES TO THE COMMENTS MADE

This Appendix has been prepared by the Chief Executive in order to summarise for Cabinet comments which question or propose alternatives in relation to the proposals in the consultation paper. Every attempt has been made to reflect these comments openly. These comments have all been taken into account in determining the final proposals to Cabinet.

A response is shown against each area of comment, written by the Chief Executive

<u>Consultation Comments</u>	<u>Response from the Chief Executive</u>
<u>Overall Comments</u>	
<p>There needs to be recognition that the Council has improved but that this improvement is fragile and organisational change has the risk of causing disruption to that improvement.</p>	<p>It is recognised that the Council has improved. This is important but it is also clear that the Council has a long way to go to meet its ambition to be amongst the best Councils in the country. The Council must not simply aim to be “not poor” but raise its horizons and build for the longer term.</p> <p>It is true that the current improvement may be fragile. It is therefore intended to implement change in a planned manner and to build the strength needed to retain improvement. There is a risk of disruption but this can be significantly mitigated by a planned and measured change process. The Council’s current structures do not exhibit the ability to always retain improvement.</p>
<p>There is no automatic link between structural change and improved performance.</p>	<p>That is agreed. It is therefore important that structural change goes alongside improvements in customer service, organisational culture, and many other changes. The lack of an automatic link does not render restructuring unnecessary or undesirable, but the Council must have a clear understanding of both the potential and limitations of structural change in improving performance.</p>

<p>There is a danger that the new structure could create silos, creating barriers between services rather than promoting cross-Council working.</p>	<p>The Council already operates with a silo culture although there are signs that this is already beginning to break down. Silos are not created by structures but by a lack of team work and a lack of cross-Council engagement. Since arriving in Northampton I have promoted the approach termed “Team Northampton” and this needs to be extended and expanded.</p> <p>The new structure does not create new silos or promote barriers between services. Indeed, quite the opposite, the structure is based on a strong Management Team supported by cohesive corporate support and Directorate Management Teams with clear roles in delivering the corporate objectives and priorities of the Council.</p>
<p>There is support for re-establishing clear professional leadership in the Council.</p>	<p>It is pleasing to note a number of positive comments on this aspect.</p>
<p>The current structure is seen as disjointed and confusing.</p>	<p>I agree. The current structure of the Council is hard to grasp, even for an experienced officer, and the balance of management does not reflect the priorities of the Council or the demands of work across the Council.</p>
<p>What is the evidence that a Head of Service structure will work better than a Corporate Manager based structure?</p>	<p>The current approach to structuring the Council has created confused accountabilities and a lack of understandable and transparent service organisation. Customers in the Housing Service for example are receiving services from a range of different management structures within the Council and accountability for meeting their overall housing needs is not clear.</p> <p>A Head of Service structure makes accountabilities clear. That enables managers to manage and deliver to the needs of the customer and to the priorities of the Council.</p> <p>Each Head of service is still part of the corporate whole but with proper accountability as Head of a definable and understandable group of services and as a member of a Directorate Team with a clear and definable role in corporate management.</p> <p>There is substantial evidence that managers and employees as a whole deliver better when roles are properly defined in terms of understandable responsibilities and also in terms of their contribution to the wider Council.</p>

There will be disparity between the levels of responsibility of Heads of Service, unlike Corporate Managers.	There will. This is because services will not always be of the same size and scale. To suggest that services can be grouped to create Heads at a similar level would be repeating former errors.
Will Heads of Service have autonomy to develop structures beneath Head of Service level?	Heads of Service will be expected to lead their services, but as always these will need to be within the overall policy and management framework of the Council.
<u>Consultation Process</u>	
Is this consultation meaningful? There is not enough detail to judge the full implications.	This is the second stage. Future stages will go into more detail. I believe that enough information exists for judgements to be made as to the conclusion of this stage.
Is the stage-by-stage approach helpful, as it can create uncertainty and concerns among employees.	Adopting a staged process allows for dialogue about implications at each stage and is a respected and pragmatic approach to such restructuring. Whilst this may mean some uncertainty, the process allows for expression of concerns and for this to be addressed. Trying to develop fully comprehensive proposals for all stages in one go is unrealistic and would create more, rather than less, uncertainty.
Can we be assured that there will be further consultation on future stages of this reorganisation, involving all those potentially affected?	Yes.

<p>How does the proposed structure help meet the tests outlined in the consultation paper?</p> <p>(The tests are that the new structure should help the Council achieve its ambition and aims more quickly, effectively, or at better value, and that it should enable the principles of the restructuring to be better met)</p>	<p>If the tests are applied to considering the current proposals against the existing structure, I would make the following response.</p> <p>As explained above, the current structure is holding back improvement and does not have the strength to retain improvement. Unchanged, it is my judgement that whilst the Council could improve above its Poor rating this would not be embedded or sustainable.</p> <p>The new structure, by establishing clear and defined accountabilities that are understandable within and without the Council, helps create tendencies to drive beyond current performance on a sustained basis. The new structure also creates better focus on key priorities which will help improve effectiveness.</p> <p>The proposed structure also deals with gaps in professional leadership and some gaps in capacity without which the Council could never make significant progress beyond the current level. For instance in Housing and Planning.</p>
<p><u>Chief Executive's Office</u></p>	
<p>The Assistant Chief Executive (ACE) should have a more “free” corporate role able to intervene to get things done, move the organisation forward.</p>	<p>The ACE will have an important role in chasing and intervening to ensure that progress is constantly being made. This is not a free-ranging role, but a role carried out on behalf of the Chief Executive within a planned framework for long-term improvement.</p>
<p>The status of the ACE needs to be clarified. Is this a Director? Is this a Deputy Chief Executive?</p>	<p>The ACE is not a Director, however they will be a key support to Management Board. The ACE and the Head of Human Resources will attend Management Board, which will be made up of the Chief Executive, Directors, and Borough Solicitor, as appropriate.</p> <p>This is not a post of Deputy Chief Executive. Where the Chief Executive requires a deputy, then cover will be provided by Directors. The ACE may represent the Chief Executive at meetings, as may Directors.</p>

<p>The ACE should have experience of managing and delivering large projects relevant to the role.</p>	<p>This is a very good point. The ACE needs to have experience of managing programmes or projects relevant to this role and a good understanding of the processes required to manage programmes and projects well.</p>
<p>Who will lead on corporate planning?</p>	<p>The Assistant Chief Executive, directed by the Chief Executive and Management Board and the Leader of the Council or assigned portfolio holder/s</p>
<p>There should be a distinction between consultation and community engagement. Community Engagement should be led from a policy development perspective. Consultation may be more linked to communications.</p> <p>Consultation should be with policy development</p> <p>Consultation capacity should not be centralised, there is value in some consultation support being located in services.</p>	<p>It should be clear that the Heads reporting to the ACE will be working as a team. I am looking for a team that works across policy / communication / community engagement / performance / improvement / partnership etc... activities and support a common work programme across the team.</p> <p>I agree that community engagement is a wider activity than communication and that consultation has strong synergy with community engagement. Effectiveness will therefore be affected by good teamwork.</p> <p>I therefore propose to place community engagement with the proposed Head of Policy.</p> <p>I note the concerns about possible centralisation of consultation capacity. As stated in the consultation proposals, this will be subject to further detailed review.</p>

<p>Do not support the inclusion of the Print Unit in Communications and Consultation – prefer in IT as there is a synergy with that service.</p> <p>The Communications team could not reasonably commission all the work of the Print Unit</p> <p>Do not support the inclusion of the website in Communications and Consultation – prefer in IT as the technical work is currently carried out in IT and they have relevant expertise.</p>	<p>There is currently a value for money study being undertaken in relation to the Print Unit. It is not proposed to make decisions on this matter until that review has been concluded.</p> <p>However the proposal that this Head should take a lead on all publishing matters (not the same as commissioning all the Print Unit’s work) is retained for later discussion as detailed in the consultation paper. This role will include the website but does not suggest a technical role for the Head. This is a role akin to a commissioning editor.</p>
<p>The Communications role is important and the structure below the Head of Service needs to be resolved.</p>	<p>This will be for the next stage of this process.</p>
<p>The Head of Improvement should include Performance</p>	<p>I propose to change the job title to Head of Performance and Improvement.</p>
<p>The need for Business Intelligence is supported but should be with Policy</p>	<p>Given other changes proposed in this paper, I consider that the right balance is to include this role in Performance and Improvement.</p> <p>The Council will be expected, as part of the CAA and LAA, and by future Use of Resources processes, to have strong data on outcomes, on the impact the Council is having on Northampton. The line between data used for policy planning and development and used for performance and improvement is increasingly disappearing and the requirements for performance and improvement are becoming more significant very rapidly.</p>

<p>The Chief Executive's Office should be responsible for complaints</p>	<p>I propose to include this proposal in the next stage of consultation.</p>
<p>Customer Services should be part of the Chief Executive's Office</p>	<p>See later comments.</p>
<p>It is a good idea to have project support in the Chief Executive's Office but this must not involve taking capacity away from Regeneration</p>	<p>There is a recognised need for project support in Regeneration and it is intended to retain the right capacity for that team's needs in that team.</p>
<p>The Chief Executive's Office should be responsible for sustainability policy rather than Environment and Culture</p>	<p>Sustainability is clearly a major corporate issue, as is economic development or community safety.</p> <p>It is not my view that such issues should automatically be managed within the Chief Executive's Office, although there could be merits in some cases.</p> <p>The Director of Environment and Culture will have an important lead role here, as outlined in the consultation paper, and I believe that this will work well.</p>
<p>Community Forums should be managed by the Policy (and Democratic Services) division</p>	<p>Subject to establishing appropriate admin support arrangements, this is agreed.</p>

<p>Democratic Services should be placed with the Borough Solicitor and not with Policy</p> <p>Meetings Services should be placed with Borough Solicitor</p> <p>The Borough Solicitor should have responsibility for Democratic Services and Meeting Services as part of taking an overview of Governance in the Monitoring Officer role.</p>	<p>The role of the Borough Solicitor in establishing good governance is an important matter. Under the consultation proposals the Borough Solicitor did not manage these services but would have maintained an overview.</p> <p>At the same time it is important to avoid the Head of Policy and Democratic Services getting diverted into administrative support for meetings and similar matters rather than working on the development of the Council's policy framework and dialogue with the public on policy matters.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed to readjust this proposal and carry out a further review at the next stage to identify the correct balance of responsibilities between the Borough Solicitor and the Assistant Chief Executive / Head of Policy and Democratic Services.</p> <p>In broad principle it is proposed that support to governance would rest with the Borough Secretary whereas policy analysis, community engagement, scrutiny advice and member development would rest with the Chief Executive's Office. Civic support would rest with the Chief Executive's Office.</p>
<p>Economic Intelligence should remain with Regeneration.</p>	<p>The comment is noted for discussion in the proposed review of Business Intelligence.</p>

<p>Where will Neighbourhood Management as opposed to Neighbourhood service delivery be placed? There is good reason to keep this in the Chief Executive's Office</p> <p>Neighbourhood Management could report to the Director of the LSP</p> <p>Neighbourhood Management could be part of Environment and Culture</p> <p>It is unclear what the position is proposed to be for Neighbourhood Management, including Area Partnerships and Community Development support. The proposed transfer of Community Centres raises concerns.</p>	<p>The consultation paper was not entirely clear on this matter.</p> <p>It is proposed that these currently existing structures report into the Head of Policy and Democratic Services. Whilst links to other services or the LSP can be made, these have not yet been tested or assessed in detail.</p> <p>One of the key tasks of this Head, working with the Management Board but particularly the Director of Environment and Culture, will be to develop further the Council's arrangements for engagement with the public on matters affecting policy decisions at neighbourhood level, and providing clear links between this and neighbourhood service delivery.</p> <p>This may, in due course, lead to further change in this area as part of developing a wider neighbourhoods approach.</p> <p>Community Centres present an immediate issue and this is discussed later in this Appendix.</p>
<p>The proposal to carry out further consultation to consider aligning managerial support with service management, particularly in relation to secretarial functions is supported and should be seen as an early priority for review.</p>	<p>This is agreed with and will need to be in place for the new structure implementation date, 1.10.08</p>

Planning and Regeneration	
<p>There is no need for the Director to be a professionally qualified Planner, the role is wider than Planning and what is needed is someone who can lead across planning and regeneration, with experience of major projects and commercial development.</p> <p>The Director could have an alternative professional qualification such as a Chartered Surveyor.</p> <p>The Planning profession could be adequately led at Head of Service level</p>	<p>I have considered this matter in depth.</p> <p>Northampton and West Northants face one of the most challenging Planning situations of any local area in the country. And whilst progress has been made on performance in terms of processing times, there is still much to do on delivering the LDF.</p> <p>Because of the unique planning arrangements in West Northants there is a need for high level planning professional leadership to get the best for the area. As the largest of the three local planning policy authorities, and as most development will be focussed in and around Northampton, it is critical that NBC provides the highest level of planning leadership it can reasonably provide.</p> <p>The next few years will see the development of a planning policy framework which will direct the expansion of Northampton from a large town to a City. We need a strong Planning professional as Director to lead this. This could not be led strategically at Head of Service level or by a non-Planner.</p> <p>Clearly the Director must also be able to relate to and lead the Regeneration side of the Directorate but the emphasis in requirements for this post must remain on Planning.</p>

<p>The proposal for Regeneration to lead on responses to WNDC major planning applications is not supported, this should be carried out by the Planning function.</p> <p>The proposal for Regeneration to lead on responses to WNDC major planning applications, taking a 'whole Council' approach is supported.</p>	<p>I do not intend to change this proposal. The role described is for Regeneration to lead and co-ordinate responses. Planning (Development Control mainly) will continue to comment as they do now, but Regeneration will be responsible for ensuring that the responses reflect all Council interests in a development proposal.</p>
<p>The Joint Planning Unit needs to be recognised as part of the Council's structure and not just as South Northants Council. This is a partnership arrangement.</p>	<p>It is. This can be recognised but it will remain the case that the JPU manager is an employee on South Northants Council.</p>
<p>The transfer of Concessionary Fares is supported but the detailed staffing implications need further examination.</p>	<p>This is agreed.</p>
<p>The Finance service should not be responsible for financial monitoring of Concessionary Fares, this will confuse their relationship with service management who are accountable for service expenditure and income.</p>	<p>There appears to be a misunderstanding as to the role involved, this will be discussed and resolved.</p>

Housing	
<p>Not all the Heads of Service should require Housing qualifications.</p>	<p>I have taken advice from the Interim Director of Customer Service and Delivery, who is a nationally recognised Housing expert.</p> <p>Her proposals are:</p> <p>The Director should have substantial operational and strategic housing experience supported by a relevant qualification. The clearly relevant qualification would be MCiH, although someone with other housing, development or construction-related qualifications at a post-graduate level might be suitable.</p> <p>The requirements for the Head of Strategy, Investment and Performance, and the Head of Landlord Services would be broadly the same except in so far that the length and depth of experience required would be less. For the former post a planning, development and construction qualification may be as relevant as a housing qualification. It should be a requirement of the Head of Landlord Services that they have substantial (over 5 years) experience in the management of social housing.</p> <p>For the Head of Housing Needs, experience in managing housing services, as well as experience in managing community or individual support services should be required. A range of professional qualifications including housing, social work and community development could be considered relevant.</p> <p>In light of this advice I propose to adjust the requirements of these posts as suggested.</p>
<p>The location of Housing Strategy in the Housing function is supported.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

<p>Tenant Participation / Customer Engagement / Resident Engagement should be located under Housing Strategy, Investment and Performance rather than Landlord Services.</p>	<p>This was a well-argued representation from a number of people. I am therefore referring this for further consideration at the next stage of the restructuring.</p>
<p>Private Sector Housing Enforcement is carried out by qualified Environmental Health Officers and is supported well in that team, particularly by admin and PR support. It should not move into Housing.</p> <p>Locating Private Sector Housing in the Housing Directorate is in the best interests of our customers.</p> <p>Private Sector Housing and Grants for housing should remain located together.</p>	<p>There is clearly concern that these services will not be as well supported in Housing. However there is also, from other responses, support for the principle of change.</p> <p>I do not propose to change this proposal. However I will be requiring that in the next stage, developing the detailed proposals, there is discussion with all the staff involved and the concerns expressed reviewed and addressed.</p> <p>For professional purposes, a link will need to remain with the Council's lead Environmental Health professional, and this will need to be thought through at the next stage.</p>

Environment and Culture	
<p>Licensing should be located with Environmental Health as there are significant similarities between these services.</p> <p>Licensing should remain separate from Environmental Health, and with Borough Solicitors, as this will continue to provide access in the Town Centre (at the Guildhall), ensure that licensing specialisms are recognised and developed, and provide a better customer focus. If moved, there is a danger of dislocation from the main customer base and a move to generic approaches rather than having specialists in Licensing.</p>	<p>There are significant and understandable concerns that Licensing could lose some identity as a function distinct from enforcement. There is also a feeling that the service could become distant from customers and from legal support.</p> <p>The integration of Licensing with other, usually environmental, disciplines is causing some negative comment nationally. However these problems seem to arise where the specialisms involved in Licensing are not recognised rather than where this is recognised and worked with.</p> <p>I do not therefore propose to change this recommendation but at the next stage the issues raised in the consultation need to be fully addressed in establishing this new division.</p>
<p>Neighbourhood Wardens should be located in Public Health, Safety and Sustainability. This is where these services best connect particularly to enforcement activities.</p>	<p>Having reviewed the extensive submissions made I agree with this response.</p> <p>Therefore Neighbourhood Wardens are proposed to be located in Public Health, Safety and Sustainability.</p>

<p>The Public Health, Safety and Sustainability division should be identified as Environmental Health as this will be more understandable to the public.</p>	<p>However this would not reflect the full nature of the division. The current title needs to be amended, and it is suggested that this will be resolved by discussion with those involved.</p>
<p>It is not clear that Community Safety is part of Public Health, Safety and Sustainability</p>	<p>It is part of this division. The CDRP relates to the Director of the LSP.</p>
<p>Sustainability should be located in the Chief Executive's Office</p>	<p>See earlier comments.</p>
<p>The Head of Leisure and Culture should be expected to have a relevant professional qualification as an essential requirement.</p>	<p>There are a number of possible qualifications that could be relevant to this post. Experience is of greater significance, but as long as it is recognised that the required qualification will be quite broadly defined, I am willing to agree this comment.</p>
<p>The proposals for Parks and Open Spaces to be managed from Leisure and Culture, but maintained by Neighbourhood Environmental Services, is supported. However this needs to be worked through in practice at the next stage.</p>	<p>I agree.</p>

<p>The Town Centre Manager should report to the Director and be a Head of Service</p> <p>The proposed wider responsibilities in the Town Centre role are supported, can it be clarified that these include parking and the bus station?</p> <p>There is a need to be clear as to the forward strategy for organisation of services in the Town Centre</p> <p>Will the Town Centre Manager's responsibilities include responsibility for the Fishmarket?</p>	<p>The TCM role is a very interesting combination of operational management and strategic partnership development.</p> <p>In the future this role may become more detached from the Council, particularly if it is possible to combine service management with other agencies and to increase private sector leadership by the development of a BID.</p> <p>For this reason, I do not see this post in the same way as Heads of Service. I do however consider that this post should have some autonomy and access to Management Board on an ongoing basis. For that reason I support the option for this post to report to the Director.</p> <p>The post will include the bus station and car parking. The issue of the Fishmarket can be taken under advice at a later date.</p>
<p><u>Finance and Support</u></p>	
<p>The Finance and Support Directorate is too large for one Director.</p>	<p>I disagree as long as the right management arrangements reporting to the Director are in place.</p>
<p>The proposed creation of a Recovery section is supported</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Given the wider scope of the "Use of Resources" assessment in 2008/9, the Finance service and the Improvement service will need to work closely together. Possibly the lead for this should now move to the Chief Executive's Office.</p>	<p>This is not a structural issue. The Use of Resources will require corporate effort and undoubtedly will need to have leading contributions from Finance and from the Chief Executive's Office</p>

<p>Facilities Management should remain with Asset Management and in particular the Guildhall should be managed alongside other Facilities Management functions.</p>	<p>Having reflected on the responses made, I agree.</p>
<p>The proposed reallocation of Community Centres is supported, however the splitting of centres between Asset Management and Leisure and Culture is debated. Clarity will be needed as to staffing arrangements.</p>	<p>This will need to subject to review at the next stage.</p>
<p>The proposed location of Asset Development in Regeneration is supported but concerns are raised about capitalisation and relationship to Housing.</p>	<p>Until the capitalisation position of these services is clarified, the proposal to relocate Asset Development is deferred.</p>

<p>The proposed combination of IT and Customer Services will not ensure that IT is led by a Head with clear understanding and experience of IT.</p> <p>It is suggested that a Head of IT would be a better proposal.</p> <p>Not convinced about the links between Customer Services and IT</p> <p>Customer Services should be located with Revenues and Benefits</p> <p>Customer Services should be located with the Assistant Chief Executive</p> <p>Complaints should be located with the Chief Executive's Office</p> <p>There are real benefits from a link to IT, but there are also potential problems of dominance of Customer Services over IT priorities</p> <p>Customer Services could be dominated by Finance and not be a sufficiently high priority for the Director</p>	<p>Having considered these options in detail, it is felt that the best location for Customer Service remains in conjunction with IT.</p> <p>If Customer Services was to be located with a major customer such as Revenues and Benefits, then there is a danger that this service will dominate. Location with the Chief Executive's office would draw that department into a significant operational role and away from its main purpose.</p> <p>The risk of Customer Service's needs dominating IT is not considered a high risk and there are positive benefits of linking these together. The Director will need to ensure that they provide unbiased support across all services.</p>
<p>It is not clear who "owns" the Council's website. Communications are too busy. Propose locating in IT.</p>	<p>See earlier comments</p>

<p>The Print Unit should be located in IT.</p>	<p>See earlier comments</p>
<p>Human Resources should be located with the Chief Executive in order to support the corporate improvement agenda strategically.</p> <p>Human Resources could be dominated by the requirements of Finance and Support and lose its focus on strategic organisational change</p> <p>The HR function needs the gravitas and status of being directly responsible to the Chief Executive</p>	<p>The proposed structure includes a dotted line to the Chief Executive. The Head of Human Resources will attend Management Board. The postholder will have their own voice with the Chief Executive and Board and indeed Members.</p> <p>I do not consider that it is realistic to think that HR would lose its strategic role in these circumstances.</p>
<p>Health and Safety (of employees) should not be located in Human Resources.</p>	<p>I disagree. Health and Safety of employees is a key HR responsibility.</p>