

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Executive - 4 February 2009

Joint report of the Chief Executive (Penny James), Core Council Review Project Director (Brendan Cleere) and Section 151 Officer (Shirlene Adam)

Core Council Review Proposals

(This matter is the responsibility of Councillor Henley, Leader of the Council)

1. Purpose of Report

Executive Summary

This report proposes a fundamental change to the structure and ways of working at all levels within the Core Council.

A thematic working model is proposed, whereby all Core Council staff will be based in one of four themes:

- Strategy and Corporate
- Growth and Development
- Business (DLO)
- Operations and Regulation

Implementation of the proposal will occur in phases, with the Strategy and Corporate Theme as phase 1 and detailed proposals for other themes being developed and implemented in subsequent phases during 2009/10.

The Human Resource implications of this proposal are significant, and a number of staff within the Strategy and Corporate theme have been placed at risk of redundancy.

The projected revenue savings for the General Fund arising from phase 1 of this proposal are £342,000 from 2009/10. One-off costs of phase 1 of the proposal are in the range £324,000 - £1.2m. Revenue savings and one-off costs arising from subsequent phases of the review will be included as further proposals are developed.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is recommended to consider the proposal and provide views to the Executive on 4 February 2009.

2.1 The background to the Core Council Review was included in the reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Board, on 30 October 2008 and 22 January 2009.

2.2 A number of related factors are driving the need for a review of the Core Council. In no particular order, these include (but are not limited to):

- An increased emphasis on the role of councils as ‘place-shapers’ and promoters of the wider well-being of the area.
- Financial pressures and the need to deliver substantial ongoing efficiency savings.
- The need to engage better with residents and communities, giving them a greater say in local decision making, priority setting and resource allocation.
- Rising customer expectations.
- The need to manage and respond to continuous and multiple changes.
- The need to develop further long term partnerships with private, public and voluntary sector organisations.
- The need to create the right environment and culture for high performance – including the right working environment.
- The need to build officer leadership capability and capacity.

3. Aim of the Core Council Review

3.1 Against the above background, the established aim of this review is to introduce a new structure and ways of working that will enable the Core Council to:

- Be fit for purpose, delivering our vision, widened roles and ways of working
- Deliver substantial efficiency savings for 2009/10 and beyond

3.2 The review is focused on staffing structures rather than Member structures. Member structures are touched on in section 13.

4. Our Vision and Culture

4.1 Clear vision and ways of working are essential starting points for any successful organisation.

4.2 The Council's vision is to:

“Make life better for people and communities”

4.3 This vision underpins the Core Council Review and will guide the work of the Council in future. To illustrate our vision further, the following roles and ways of working have been shared with members. These will act as ‘design principles’ for the new Core Council and the future development of the organisation:

Roles <i>What will we do?</i>	Culture <i>How will we work?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency and Improvement. To deliver substantial efficiency savings, through the new structure and in the way we operate. • Place-shaping and wider well-being. To understand the issues and challenges facing Taunton Deane. To establish more clearly what kind of place we want the Borough to be, and overcome obstacles to achieving this. To deliver LAA outcomes for the area. To act as a convenor of local services and partners. • Community engagement and empowerment. To give people a stronger say in local services and priority setting. To move towards an engagement model where the community decides and the Council acts as an executive to enact these decisions. • Good Services. To enable the delivery of good, value for money services, reflecting local priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership. To offer strong leadership and take ownership of issues that matter to people. • Ambition. To be ambitious for our area and communities. • Focus. To establish a limited number of top priorities and focus on the delivery of these. • Outward looking. To be concerned with the wider well-being of the area. • Customer first. To put the needs of customers and residents at the heart of all we do. • Flexible. To be flexible and responsive to different community needs and changing circumstances within the community and organisation. • Collaborative. To work in partnership to improve the lives of residents and communities. Not to be precious about our own organisational autonomy. • Performance. To rigorously manage performance of services and outcomes. To be a formidable client. • “One Council”. To promote stronger common purpose and collaborative working across different parts of the authority. • Change. To initiate change where necessary and engage positively with changes affecting the authority and area.

4.4 Organisational Development activity will have a key role in developing and embedding these roles and culture within the Core Council. This is referred to in more detail in section 8.

5. Proposal for the Core Council

5.1 The proposal for the new Core Council is set out in the following sections:

- Thematic Working – An Introduction (section 5.3)
- Proposed Themes and Organisational Structure (section 5.4)
- Future service standards (section 5.5)
- The role of Corporate Management Team (section 5.6)
- Human Resource Implications (section 6)
- Recruitment Method and Timetable (section 7)
- Organisational Development (section 8)

5.2 Further sections deal with the financial implications of the proposal, links to the Pioneer Somerset programme of enhanced two-tier working, consultation arrangements, risk assessment, equality impact assessment and implications for political management arrangements.

5.3 Thematic Working – An Introduction

5.31 The report proposes the introduction of thematic working across the organisation as the most appropriate model for delivering our widened role and to reinforce the ways of working outlined previously. Working in a thematic way will typically mean:

- Stronger co-operation and greater inter-play between different service areas and disciplines, to address particular organisational and/or community issues.
- Greater use of ‘task and finish’ working, with opportunities for people to bring their expertise, interest and capacity to a project not traditionally perceived as part of their ‘day job’.
- A wider framework of accountability for individuals, who will report to different managers for the different projects they are involved in. Within this framework, individuals will still receive day-to-day support from a single manager, who will carry out regular performance reviews and facilitate personal/career development. This is a fundamentally different way of working for all Council staff.
- Greater responsiveness to urgent and/or important issues (‘hotspots’) that arise in communities and localities across the Borough.
- More generic working, where professionalism and technical expertise will be highly valued, but not to the extent that wider issues affecting the Council and community are perceived as ‘somebody else’s department’.
- Greater sharing of knowledge and expertise across different themes. There will be opportunities for individuals to gain experience, develop their career and bring new perspectives to achieve better outcomes for the organisation, local residents and communities.
- Convening and working closely with partner organisations to tackle complex community issues that require the input of more than one agency.

5.4 Proposed Themes and Organisational Structure

5.41 Core Council staff will be grouped into one of the following four themes:

- Strategy and Corporate
- Growth and Development
- Business (DLO)
- Operations and Regulation

5.42 These themes will provide the 'home-base' for staff within the new structure. However, in keeping with the approach outlined for thematic working, staff will frequently find themselves working closely with those in other thematic groups on particular issues or projects.

5.43 Table 1 overleaf gives an overview of each theme and the proposed management arrangements. Structural diagrams of the existing and proposed new organisational structures are attached as Appendix A and B respectively.

5.44 Implementation of the Core Council Review will occur in phases over 2009/10. This phased approach will provide the time and capacity necessary to manage the transition to the new Core Council, enable appropriate support to be provided for all staff affected and ensure continuity of service to residents over a period of major organisational change. Details of the proposed phasing are also provided in Table 1.

5.5 Service Standards

5.51 Standards of service provided to our customers will be an important consideration in proposals emerging from this review. The level of Officer resources proposed will have an impact on service levels. This will present Members with choices around relative priorities and resourcing of each individual service area and theme.

5.52 Standards of service can be expressed in qualitative and/or quantitative Terms. The proposals brought forward will give Members an indication of what level of resources is required to achieve a certain service level. It is unlikely that the Council will be able to retain an excellent standard of service across the piece with a reduction in resources from current levels. As the review unfolds advice will be given on the impact of each proposal on service standards.

5.53 With respect to the initial proposal relating to the strategy and corporate theme it is the view of Corporate Management Team that the level of standard of strategy making and performance/client management will reduce from its current excellent standard to a good standard in CPA terms. If Members wish to reduce the level of

resources further than suggested in the proposal at section 9 then service levels will reduce further.

- 5.54 There is a clear link between the quality of strategy making and clienting and results on the front line. For example excellent housing strategy enabled the bid to Government for the funding for the rough sleepers initiatives and extension to Lindley House, excellent work on the LDF led to a substantial sum of money coming to the organisation as Housing and Planning Delivery Grant, capacity in Policy and Performance enabled us to respond swiftly and effectively to the proposals to close Post Offices and BT Phone Boxes, and as a final example excellent work in sports enabled swift and effective bids to government for free swimming funding.

Table 1 – Overview of Proposed Core Council Themes, Management Arrangements and Phasing

Theme	Indicative Role and Functions	Management Arrangements	Phasing
Strategy and Corporate	<i>Strategy</i> for the place and the organisation. Functions include: performance and improvement, forward planning and the Local Development Framework, CAA, economic strategy, sports strategy, housing strategy, community strategy and Local Area Agreement, legal & democratic; research & consultation, equalities, health improvement, sustainability, climate change, PR & marketing, client and contract management, retained services, transformation, corporate performance, information management, website and strategic customer access.	3 management posts and new staffing structure	Implement in one phase , with recruitment to all new posts in March 2009.
Growth and Development	<i>Delivery</i> of growth and development in the community. Functions include, enabling affordable housing, development management/control, heritage and landscape, economic development & regeneration, Tourist Information Centre, community development and empowerment, leisure development and open spaces, community safety, community projects, Project Taunton.	Current management and staffing arrangements continue, pending full review	Proposal approved by members: June 2009. New structure implemented: October 2009.
Business (DLO)	Highways, Horticulture & Housing DLO, and Housing Asset Management pending full review.	Current management and staffing arrangements continue, pending full review.	Commissioning proposals approved by members: June 2009 Preferred option approved by members: October 2009. Implementation timetable depends on nature of preferred option.
Operations and Regulation	Bringing together all other functions not listed above, i.e.: environmental health, parking, cemeteries & crematorium, housing operations, building control.	Current management and staffing arrangements continue, pending full review	Proposal approved by members: October 2009. New structure implemented: January 2010.
CMT and full review of final structure	Chief Executive, strategic directors and support staff.	Current management and staffing arrangements continue, pending full review	Proposal approved by members: January 2010. New structure implemented: April 2010.

5.6 Corporate Management Team (CMT)

5.61 As highlighted in the background to this report, the Council previously approved a proposal to refresh the Corporate Management Team of the Council and this was implemented in April 2007.

5.62 CMT currently comprises the Chief Executive (Penny James), four Strategic Directors and the Council's Monitoring Officer (Tonya Meers).

5.63 The overall role of CMT within the new Core Council structure remains as envisaged in the original proposal implemented in April 2007, as follows:

- To create and lead a sustained and shared vision for the Borough and organisation.
- To commission and lead the delivery of priority outcomes from managers, external agencies, partnerships and others as appropriate.
- To champion the Council's culture and ways of working, and ensure that these are embedded in all parts of the organisation.
- To lead the Council's change and transition agenda.
- To develop leadership capability across the authority. Both leadership of place and leadership of the organisation.
- To ensure resources and capabilities are properly aligned with the authority's ambitions and vision for Borough and organisation.
- To create a strong performance management culture, enabling the delivery of community and service based outcomes focused on residents' needs and priorities.
- To create an excellent work environment for staff.

5.64 Strategic Directors are Shirlene Adam (also Deputy Chief Executive and s.151 officer), Joy Wishlade, Kevin Toller and Brendan Cleere. Under this proposal, Strategic Directors will have the following responsibilities:

- **Area working.** Each director will take responsibility for one of the four identified geographic areas within Taunton Deane. They will champion the delivery of the Council's overall vision within their area. They will resolve complex service, multi-agency or community issues. They will be a point of contact for ward councillors and key partners. They will promote citizen engagement and empowerment in decision making and priority setting. They will work closely with managers and front-line staff within different themes as appropriate, to resolve complex community issues.
- **Themes.** Each director will take overall leadership responsibility for one of the four identified themes. They will act as coach and mentor to the managers within 'their' theme, and carry out their performance and development review. Directors will be 'matched' to themes by April 2009.

- **Projects and Priorities.** Directors will have overall leadership responsibility for key projects and priorities that relate to the delivery of the Council's vision. Some of these projects will be of a 'task and finish' nature, while others will be ongoing. Current examples include the development of a climate change strategy, equality and diversity, the staff travel plan, Project Taunton, performance and improvement, the Local Area Agreement, Comprehensive Area Assessment and Pioneer Somerset. Directors will commission and lead managers and staff from different thematic groups as required, ensuring the successful delivery of projects and priorities. Directors will be 'matched' to priorities and projects by April 2009.
- **Partnerships.** Each director will have lead responsibility for key partnerships, such as SWOne, Somerset Waste Partnership and Tone Leisure. They will develop strong and effective working relationships to ensure the delivery of partnership priorities. They will tackle performance issues within the partnership, and ensure effective scrutiny and monitoring of outcomes. Directors will be 'matched' to partnerships by April 2009.

5.65 During the transition to the new Core Council structure, no change to the existing CMT membership is proposed. This means that the current arrangement of a Chief Executive, four strategic directors and monitoring officer will continue during a period of major organisational change for the authority.

5.66 The role and membership of CMT will be reviewed again in January 2010, when implementation of the new thematic structure has been completed.

5.67 The Legal and Democratic Services Manager (Tonya Meers) sits on CMT as the Council's Monitoring Officer. The current structure of the Legal and Democratic service was approved by Full Council in November 2007. With the exception of a move to a thematic working model, no further changes to the current structure or staffing within the Legal and Democratic service are proposed.

6. Human Resource (HR) Implications

6.1 This report proposes change across the whole organisation, with significant human resource implications.

6.2 Proposed structural changes in the first phase will affect:

- Staff in the proposed 'Strategy and Corporate' theme

6.3 Proposals arising from subsequent reviews will affect other remaining staff across the Core Council, as follows:-

- Staff within the Growth and Development theme.
- Staff within the Business theme
- Staff within the Operations and Regulation theme.
- CMT and support staff.

- 6.4 A number of post-holders affected by the first phase of this proposal have been formally notified as being at risk of redundancy. The confidential Appendix G identifies these posts and the ring-fencing arrangements that will apply, in respect of recruitment to posts within the proposed new structure.
- 6.5 No staff in themes connected to subsequent phases of this proposal have been placed at risk of redundancy, although this may be necessary at a later stage.
- 6.6 As previously mentioned the HR implications of the Core Council Review are significant both for the Council and also for the individuals affected by the proposals. The actions taken by the Council to identify, address and support staff in dealing with these implications will have a significant impact on whether the new ways of working and management structure are successful.
- 6.7 As part of the consultation with UNISON, members, managers and staff we have identified a series of actions that have already or will need to be put in place.
- 6.8 A corporate Support Plan has been developed as a consequence of this consultation. It is important to acknowledge that this support must be continued throughout the remainder of the phases to be implemented and as the structure settles down.

7. Recruitment Approach and Timetable

- 7.1 This section applies to the recruitment of posts in the first phase of the Review.
- 7.2 Recruitment to new posts in the Strategy and Corporate theme will be completed by 1 April 2009.
- 7.3 This recruitment schedule and the ring fencing arrangements have been subject to detailed consultation with UNISON in accordance with the Council's own Redundancy Policy and with the staff who are 'at risk'.
- 7.4 Generic job descriptions and person specifications for all new posts have been prepared.
- 7.5 The financial implications of this proposal have been based on indicative job evaluation results. A formal evaluation exercise will be completed prior to the recruitment exercise.

- 7.6 An external recruitment exercise will be carried out for new management posts, in the event that these are not filled internally. This will extend the above indicative timetable by a minimum of three months. Other new posts will be filled either by internal recruitment or by staff who are unsuccessful in their application for higher graded posts.
- 7.7 Salary protection will not be offered to staff who apply for and are recruited to a lower grade post.
- 7.8 A People Management Framework, Charter and set of managerial competencies have been developed. These are consistent with the widened roles and new ways of working outlined previously. Assessment against these competencies will form an important part of the recruitment process to new management posts. This documentation will also guide future organisational development activity.

8. Organisational Development (OD)

- 8.1 The Council will need an adequately resourced Organisational Development plan to ensure the success of the overall review and ultimately the Council itself. The Council will be populated with posts requiring the deployment of new and challenging competencies and skills.
- 8.2 The OD plan will be managed by the existing and currently vacant part time post that currently sits within the corporate centre. The post holder will work closely with CMT and with the training and development team located within South West One using the resources already allocated for training and development for the Core Council. This proposal therefore does not seek any additional resources for OD but does acknowledge the importance of this function in terms of ensuring that staff are aligned too, and capable of, delivering the Council's overall vision and service priorities.
- 8.3 One of the change projects the Council is exploring with its SWOne partner is the People Excellence Model or PEM. PEM is a model deployed successfully by IBM.
- 8.4 The essence of PEM is that each member of staff has both a 'task' manager and a 'development' manager. The development manager function is carried out by dedicated PEM managers.
- 8.5 It is resource intensive and the Council will consider the emerging business case before making any final decision as to whether to deploy PEM within the Core Council. This will be subject to a further report to Members in the near future.

9. Detailed proposals for Strategy and Corporate theme.

- 9.1 The Strategy and Corporate theme includes all of the major strategy functions of the Council, the retained functions (post creation of SWOne), the corporate performance function, all of the client and contract management functions, and

finally all of the corporate functions now deployed in the Legal and Democratic Services team.

- 9.2 Table 1 presented earlier in this report gives more detail on the functions that will be delivered by this theme.
- 9.3 The Strategy part of the theme is created by moving all of the staff in Housing Strategy, Forward Plan, Sports, and Policy and Performance less the Community Safety Officer post which will move into the proposed Growth and Development theme to align with all of the other community focussed functions of the Council.
- 9.4 The Performance and Client part of the theme is created by bringing together the corporate performance posts currently in the Policy and Performance team, the existing SWOne Client team, the Retained functions of the Council (strategic Human Resources, Finance, OD, Revs and Benefits, Health and Safety and the budgets for IT and Property advice). The role of the Client element will also expand to include the clienting and performance management of all of the Council's external partnerships and Contracts.
- 9.5 The Legal and Democratic part of the theme simply sees the existing team managed by the Legal and Democratic Manager brought into this theme without any change. It is proposed to take this opportunity to formally move the Scrutiny Officer post into this part of the theme.
- 9.6 Effectively three substantive teams are formed within this theme. They will be required to work closely together and to work with and support other staff in the organisation. In the first instance Shirlene Adam is the Strategic Director taking responsibility for the leadership of this theme through the implementation and transition phase.
- 9.7 The two new teams will be headed by a senior manager. The two new posts of Strategy Manager and Performance and Client Manager will operate at a level between the existing Directors and Core Council Managers. This is equivalent structurally to the current Legal and Democratic Services manager.
- 9.8 The two Managers will be supported by 4 Strategy and 3 Performance and Client Lead Officers who will be senior professionals. The posts will bring a blend of skills and experiences that will allow all of the functions moving into the teams to be delivered.
- 9.9 The Lead Officers will be supported by 6 Strategy and 2 Performance and Client Officers who will be professional and technical experts in the range of activities needed to support the functions.
- 9.10 The two new teams will share administrative support from 3 Support Staff. This will be more cost effective than the current administrative support arrangements.
- 9.11 The existing structure charts for the affected areas of the organisation and the proposed structure for the Strategy and Corporate theme are shown at Appendix C and D respectively.

- 9.12 Some staff will be direct transfers into the new structure and some will be put at risk as their current posts are substantially affected by this proposal. The later group have been put at risk and will be ring fenced to a certain level of post commensurate to the level of their existing post in the organisation.
- 9.13 The confidential Appendix G deals with the impact of this proposal on the staff establishment and individual post holders.
- 9.14 Appendix G identifies the posts and post holders who will directly transfer, those put at risk and the specific ring fencing arrangements, those post holders who are currently seconded from other partners to whom the Council owes a duty of care, and, those post holders on temporary or fixed term contracts that the Council owes a duty of care too and those we don't. If we owe a duty of care those individuals will be included in the appropriate ring fence.
- 9.15 The duty of care assumptions and the ring fencing proposals will be subject to specific consultation with staff and Unison.

10. The Financial Implications of creating the Strategy and Corporate theme – Section 151 Officer Report

- 10.1 The aims of this review are set out in section 3 of this report. In order to deliver substantial efficiency savings for 2009/10, the first phase of the review is not being done on an "invest to save" basis. Therefore the one-off costs associated with this review will be funded from General Fund reserves – with no payback to reserves over future years.
- 10.2 The ongoing savings generated by the first phase of this review (Strategy & Corporate) will generate ongoing savings of £342k per annum. This will therefore contribute £342k towards the Councils budget gap position for 2009/10 onwards.
- 10.3 One of the key assumptions in this proposal is that one "lead" post within the Performance and Client area will be funded from savings generated by the SWOne Procurement project. This project is delivering the savings forecast at deal closure, and will need to be monitored closely to ensure that additional savings are generated. This is achievable, and I am comfortable that the budget forecast is prepared on this basis.
- 10.4 The other key assumption is around job evaluation. The proposal has been costed based on "indicative" job evaluation results for the new structure. This will formally be completed in time for the recruitment process. Should the formal process result in grades that are substantially different, then the financial position will change and Members will be informed.
- 10.5 The one-off costs associated with this proposal will not be known with certainty until the recruitment process is completed (end of March 09). The one-off costs will be funded from the General Fund Reserves and in order to test the "affordability" of the proposal, some sensitivity analysis of potential outcomes has

been undertaken. The one-off costs will, depending on the recruitment outcomes, be in the range of £300k (best case) - £1.2m (worst case). The more likely outcome is somewhere in the middle.

10.6 It is important therefore that the Councils reserves are in a sufficiently healthy position to support this review. A separate report is presented to this meeting, detailing a recent review of the Councils major reserves that has been undertaken. This results in a forecast General Fund Reserve position of £2.35m. This minimises the risk associated with the uncertainty of the one-off costs, and means the Council is in a position where this first phase of the review is affordable and deliverable. The recommendations in this report to the Executive and Full Council will requests that a sum of £1m is “ring-fenced” from the General Fund Reserves to fund the one-off costs of this proposal. Any surplus will be automatically returned to reserves in late March 2009.

10.7 Future phases of the review will be assessed as per the timetable set out in this report. The financial implications, including the potential one-off costs (and the affordability of them) will be detailed in future proposals presented to Members.

11. Links to Pioneer Somerset

11.1 Pioneer Somerset is a five year programme of enhanced two tier working, agreed by the six principal authorities of Somerset after the rejection of a bid for a single unitary council for the County.

11.2 There are a number of emerging proposals for enhanced two tier working under the umbrella of Pioneer Somerset. This proposal precedes the longer term proposals coming out of the Pioneer Somerset Programme. However, the Core Council will work in a way to shape the further development of Pioneer Somerset proposals and respond to these as they emerge.

12. Consultation

12.1 Formal consultation period on the first phase of this proposal runs from 15 January 2009 until 15 February 2009.

12.2 Informal consultation and dialogue has taken place with staff and members of the Council over a considerable period of time. This process has informed the proposal, and is summarised below:

- An officer project team led by Kevin Toller and Steve Hughes was set up during the summer of 2008, and input was sought from Members, managers and staff across the Council. The project team established the main vision and drivers for the Core Council Review, concluding that a thematic approach would be the most appropriate working model for the Council. The report to the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 30 October 2008 summarises the work undertaken by the Project Team.

- A Project Director (Brendan Cleere) was appointed in October 2008 and he has attended numerous one-to-one and team meetings to discuss the Core Council Review. A set of Frequently Asked Questions was launched in October 2008 and circulated to members and staff. Staff briefings about the Core Council Review also took place in October, December 2008 and January 2009. These will continue throughout the year. Frequently Asked Questions appear as Appendix F to this report.
- Fortnightly meetings of the UNISON Change Forum have been taking place since October, including regular updates on the Core Council Review alongside the Council's other major change projects.
- Similarly, elected members of all parties have provided input on the Core Council Review, both through the Change Programme Member Steering Group and through Group briefings.
- External views were sought at an early stage from bodies such as the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), Audit Commission and Government Office for the South West (GOSW). A separate briefing for members and senior managers on the external challenges facing local government is taking place on 5 February 2009. This will be delivered by Stephen Fletcher, Regional Associate of the IDeA.

13. Political Management Arrangements

- 13.1 This proposal has concentrated solely on the officer structure of the Core Council. During informal consultation, members have discussed the possibility of reviewing the current political management arrangements alongside the officer structure.
- 13.2 It is proposed that political management arrangements are reviewed separately with members, under a project led by the Council's Monitoring Officer, Tonya Meers.
- 13.3 This project will deliver a proposal for Members to consider by the end of March 2009 with the aim of achieving implementation in the new municipal year.

14. Risk

- 14.1 An updated risk assessment and action plan connected to this proposal has been completed and is kept up to date by the Project Director and reviewed regularly by CMT.
- 14.2 Any significant risks of continued concern to CMT will be verbally reported at the meeting.

15. Equality Impact Assessment

15.1 The development of this proposal, and the approach proposed for recruitment activities, is in accordance with all relevant equalities legislation. Managers within each of the proposed thematic groups will be responsible for carrying out detailed Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) of their respective service areas. Actions arising from these EIAs will be included within the appropriate service operational plan, or the Council's Corporate Equality Scheme.

16. Views of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

16.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Board considered proposals for the Core Council on 22 January 2009. The Board agreed to support the proposals and to ask the Executive to consider an additional 'lead' post in the Strategy and Corporate theme. A summary of concerns raised during debate at the Overview and Scrutiny Board is attached as Appendix E. Appendix E also captures the main comments and concerns raised by UNISON and staff at the time of writing this report. Members will receive regular updates on responses to the consultation.

16.2 The Executive is asked to consider the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and other comments received during the consultation to date.

17. Next Steps

17.1 The views of Overview and Scrutiny on the overall proposal for the Core Council and for the creation and detail of the Strategy and Corporate theme will be considered by the Executive on the 4th February 2009.

17.2 The Executive will make recommendations to Full Council on the 17th February 2009. Full Council will make the decision based on the Executive recommendations and in light of the outcome of the formal consultation with staff and Unison.

17.3 The recruitment to the new posts within the Strategy and Corporate theme will begin in early March. Preceding this will be an opportunity for all staff at risk to express a preference for jobs. The post of Strategy Manager and Performance and Client Manager will be Member appointments.

17.4 Brendan Cleere will retain the role of Core Council Review Project Director until the entire review is completed.

17.5 Concurrent to the recruitment activity for Strategy and Corporate will be the development of detailed proposals for the Growth and Development and Business (DLO) themes. These proposals will come to Overview and Scrutiny in time for Full Council approval in June/July 2009.

18. Recommendations

18.1 The Executive is **recommended:**

- i) To consider the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (at Appendix E), including the request to consider an additional lead post in the Strategy and Corporate theme.
- ii.) To consider other comments from staff and UNISON received at the time of writing, also attached as Appendix E.
- iii) **To approve and recommend to Full Council:**
 - a) The overall proposal for the new Core Council structure, including the establishment of four themes covering all Core Council staff;
 - b.) The detailed proposal for the Strategy and Corporate theme, described in section 9;
 - c.) The approach proposed in table 1 for phasing the implementation of the overall structure;
 - d.) The timetable for the proposed phasing, described in table 1.
 - e.) The proposals for recruitment to the Strategy and Corporate theme, outlined in section 7.
 - f.) That salary protection will not be offered to staff who apply for and are recruited to lower grade posts throughout all phases of the Core Council Review.
 - g.) That a sum of £1m is “ring-fenced” from the General Fund Reserves to fund the one off costs of this proposal. Any earmarked fund remaining at the end of this first phase will be returned to the General Fund Reserve at the end of March 2009.
 - h.) That political management arrangements are reviewed separately with members by the end of March 2009, with the aim of achieving implementation in the new municipal year.

Background Papers

Interim report on the Core Council Review to the Overview and Scrutiny Board of the 30th October 2008.

Legal and Democratic Services report to the Executive of the 14th November 2007.

Proposals to Refresh the Corporate Management of the Council to the Executive of the 7th February 2007.

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CORE COUNCIL REVIEW

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE: 4 FEBRUARY 2009.

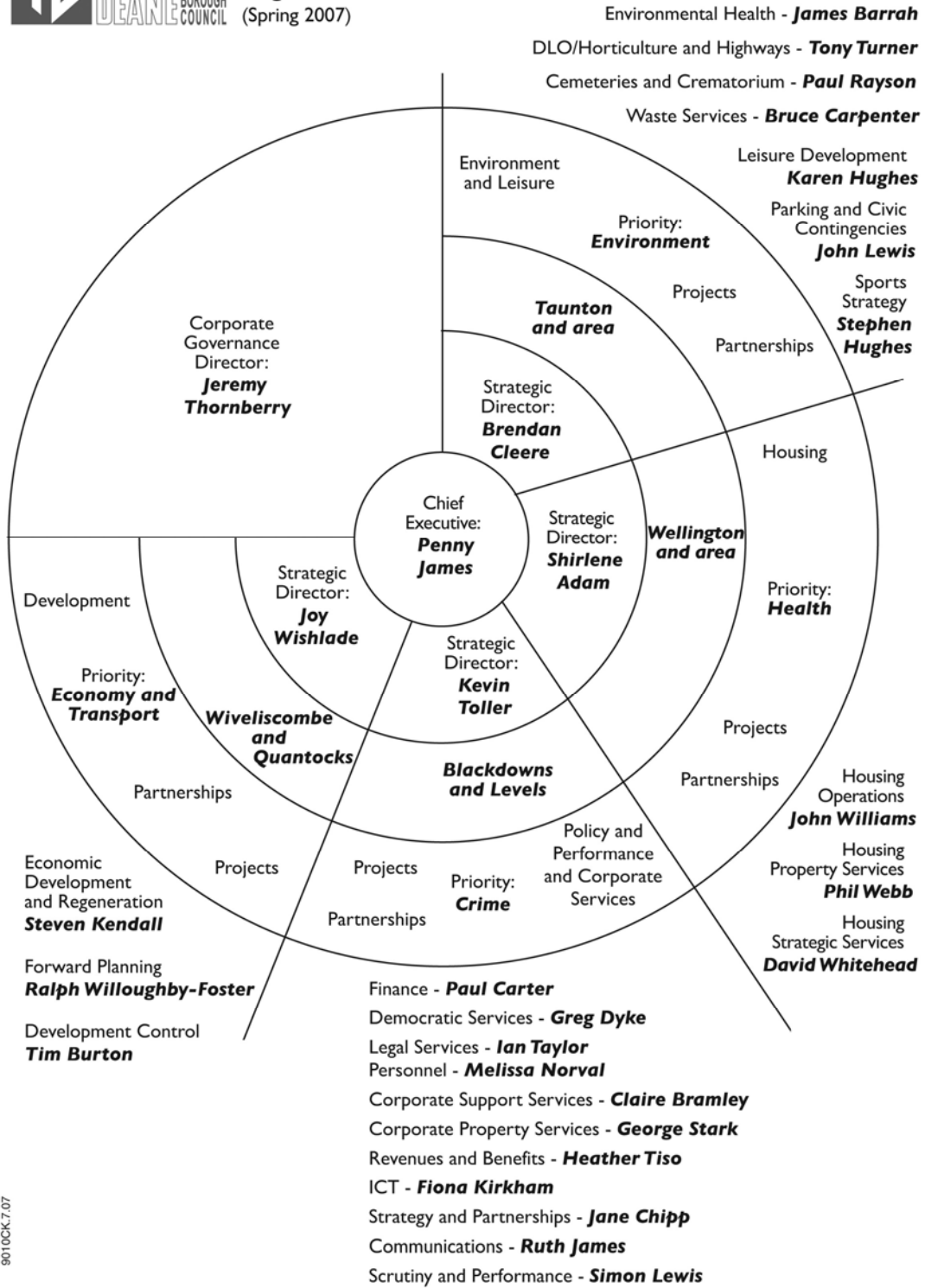
APPENDICES

- Appendix A:** Current organisational structure
- Appendix B:** Overview of proposed Core Council structure
- Appendix C:** Chart showing current council management, followed by structures of individual services within the proposed Strategy and Corporate theme.
(Please note these latter structures are included to illustrate the functions carried out and may not be an accurate record of current staffing arrangements).
- Appendix D:** Proposed structure of Strategy and Corporate Theme
- Appendix E:** Overview of Consultation Responses (at 27/01/09)
- Appendix F:** Frequently Asked Questions. Two sets are included – the first is a general set issued to staff and the second set deals with questions raised by staff at briefings held on 14 January 2009.
- Appendix G (confidential):** Implications of the proposal on individual staff within the Strategy and Corporate theme

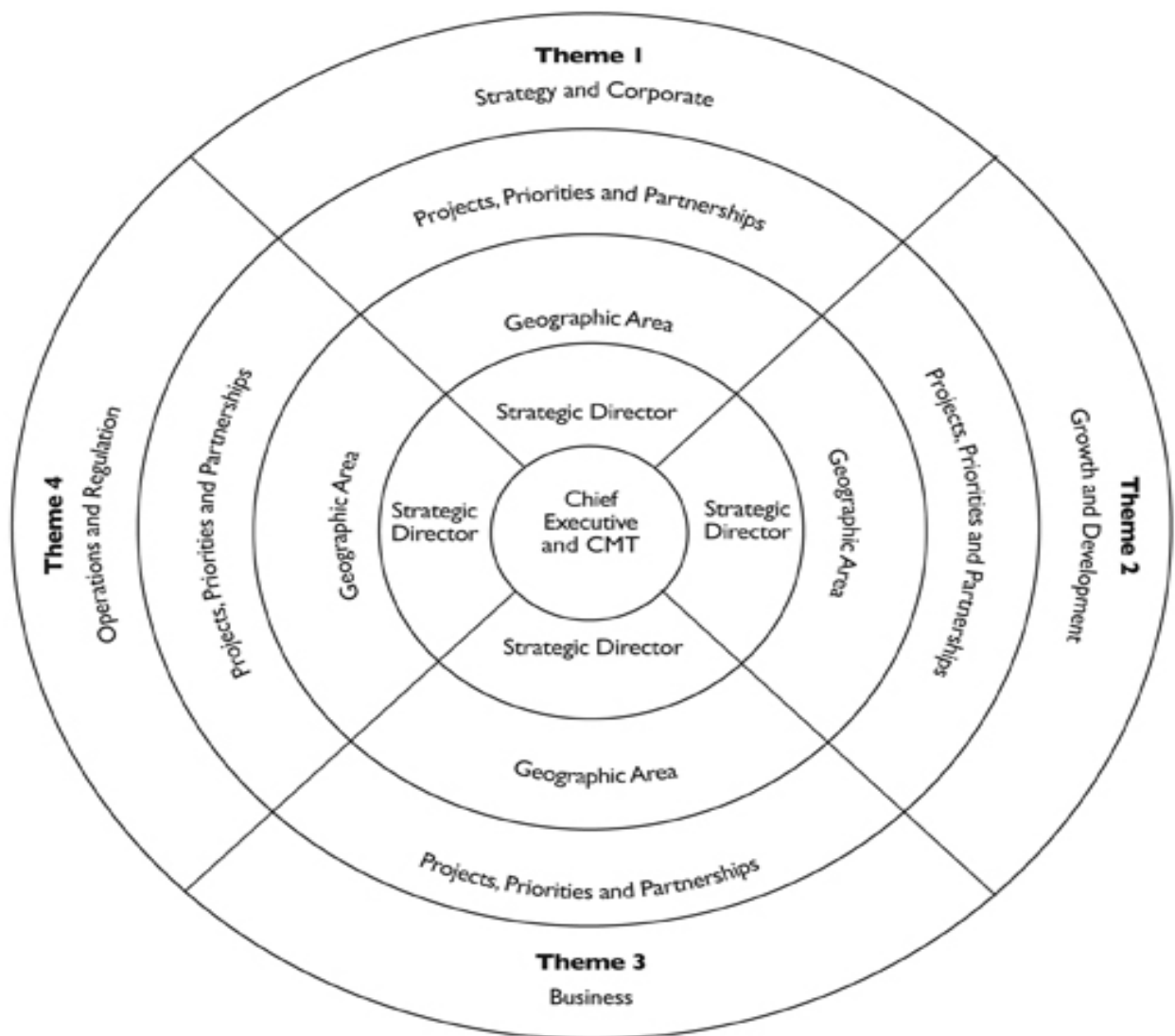
Appendix A



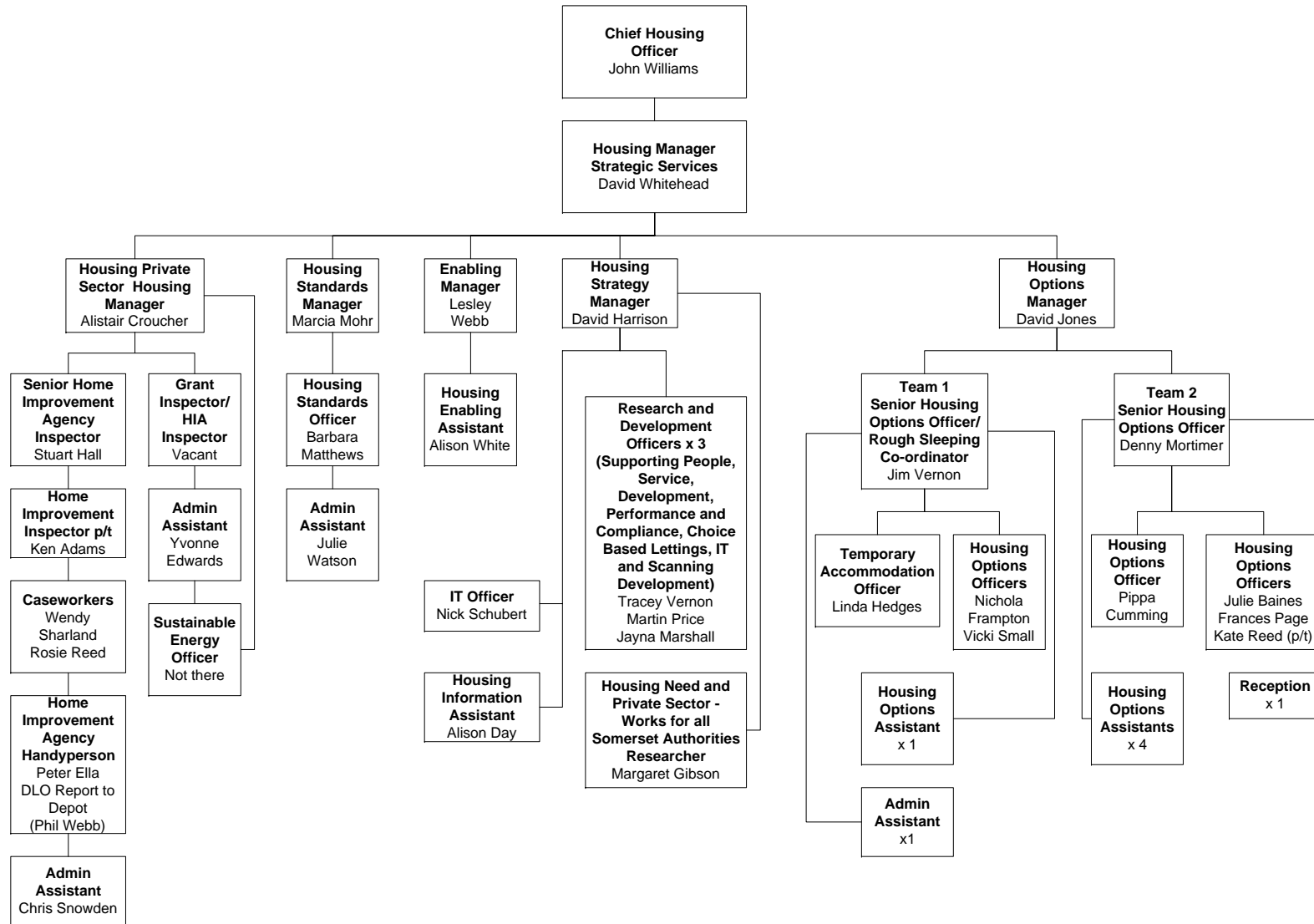
Taunton Deane Borough Council
Organisational Structure
 (Spring 2007)



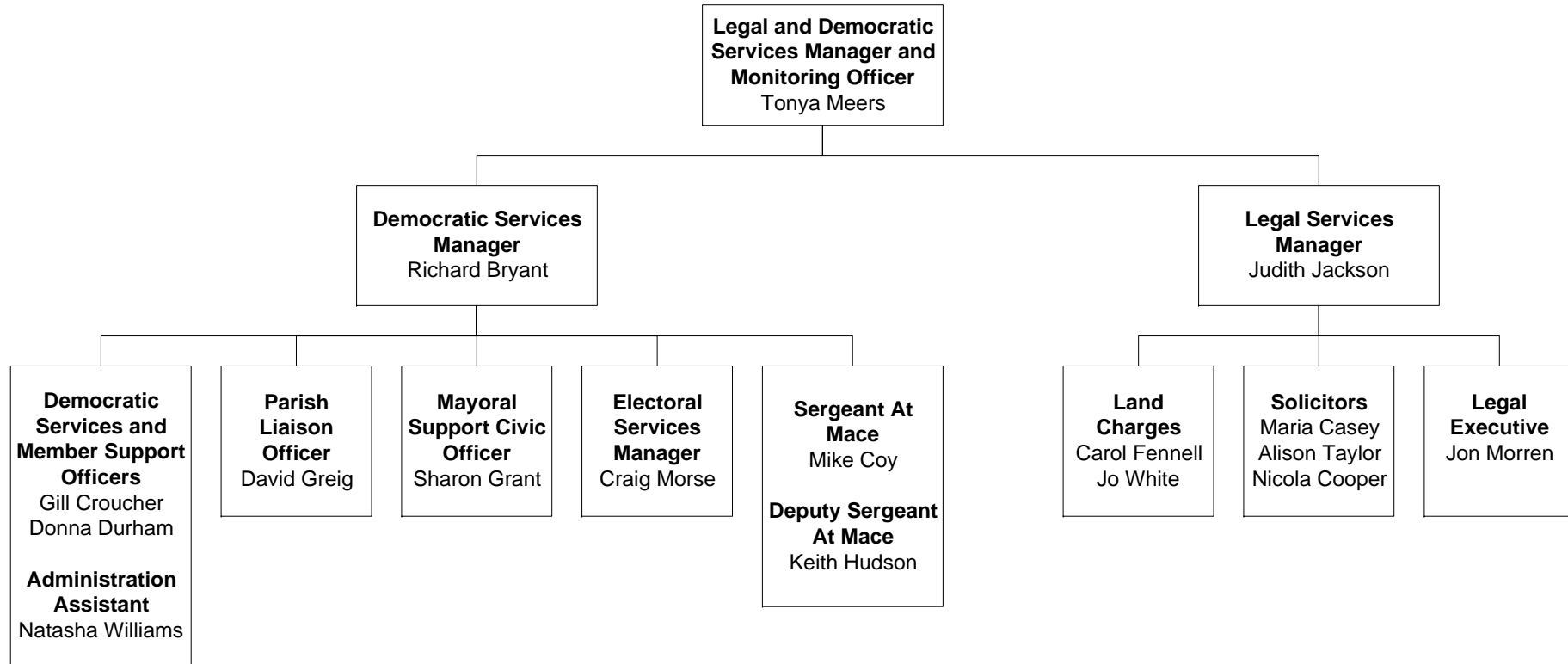
Appendix B – Overview of Proposed Core Council Structure



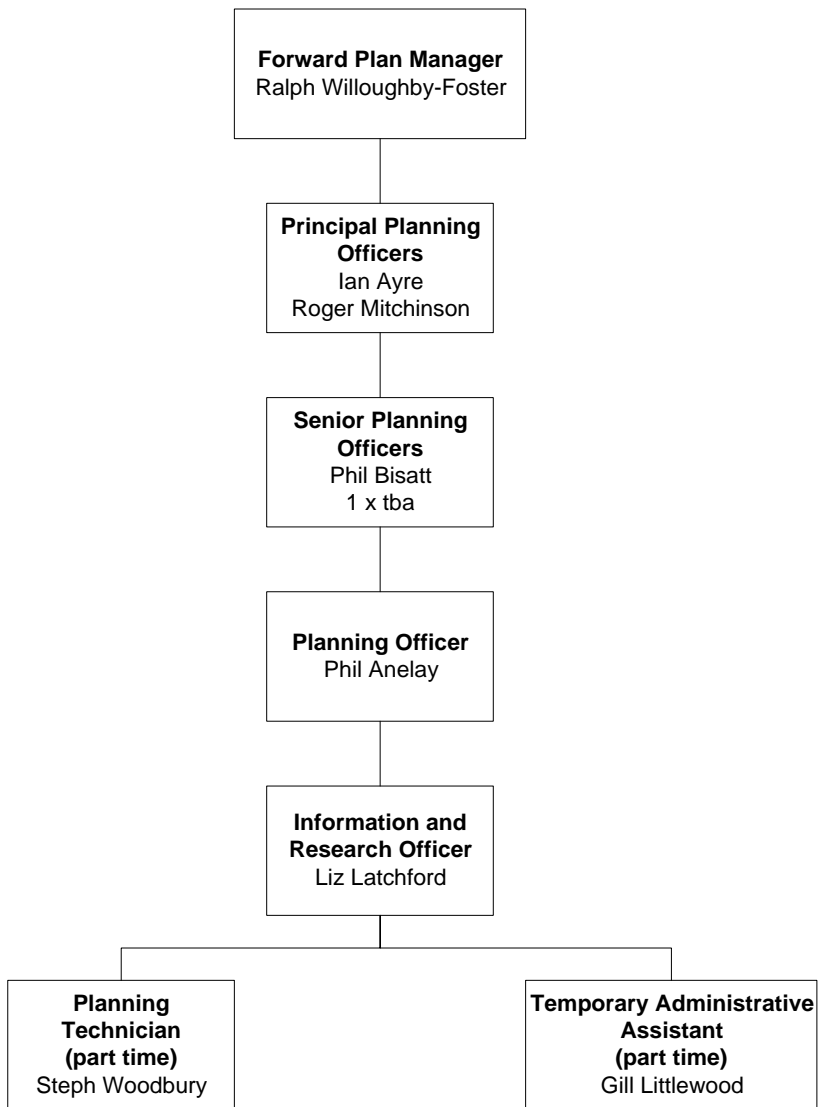
Appendix C – Housing Officer Structure



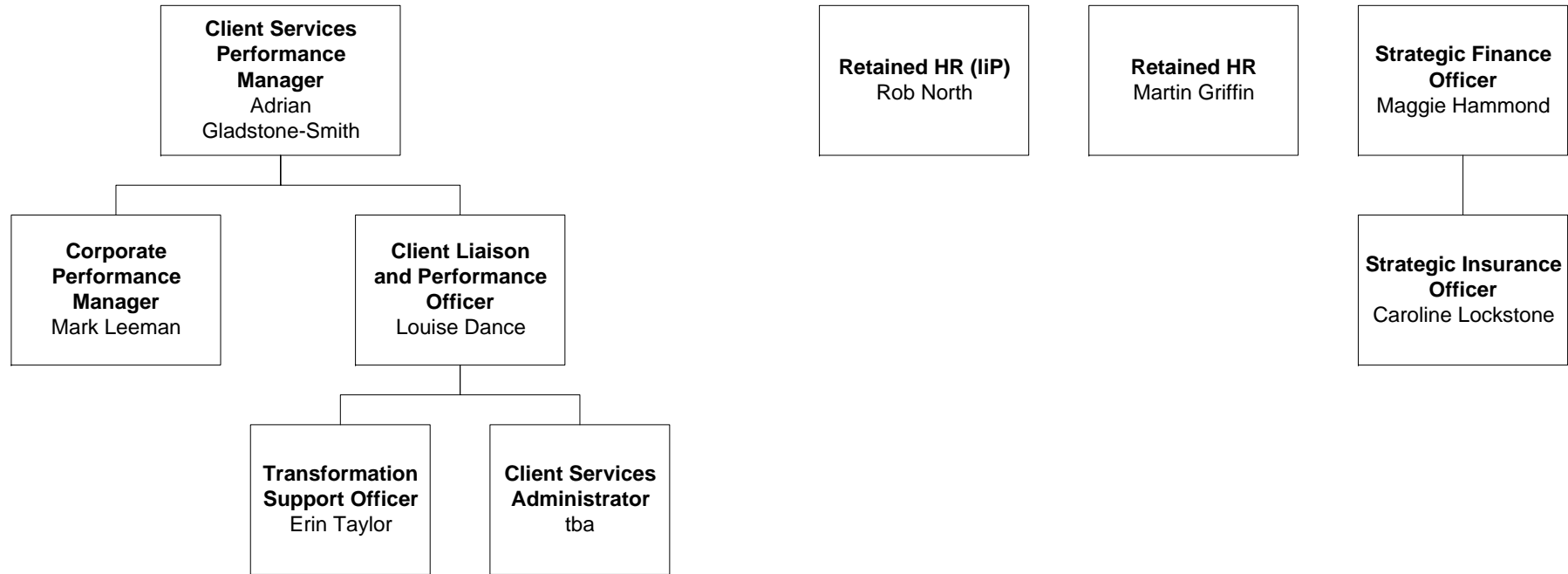
Appendix C – Legal and Democratic Officer Structure



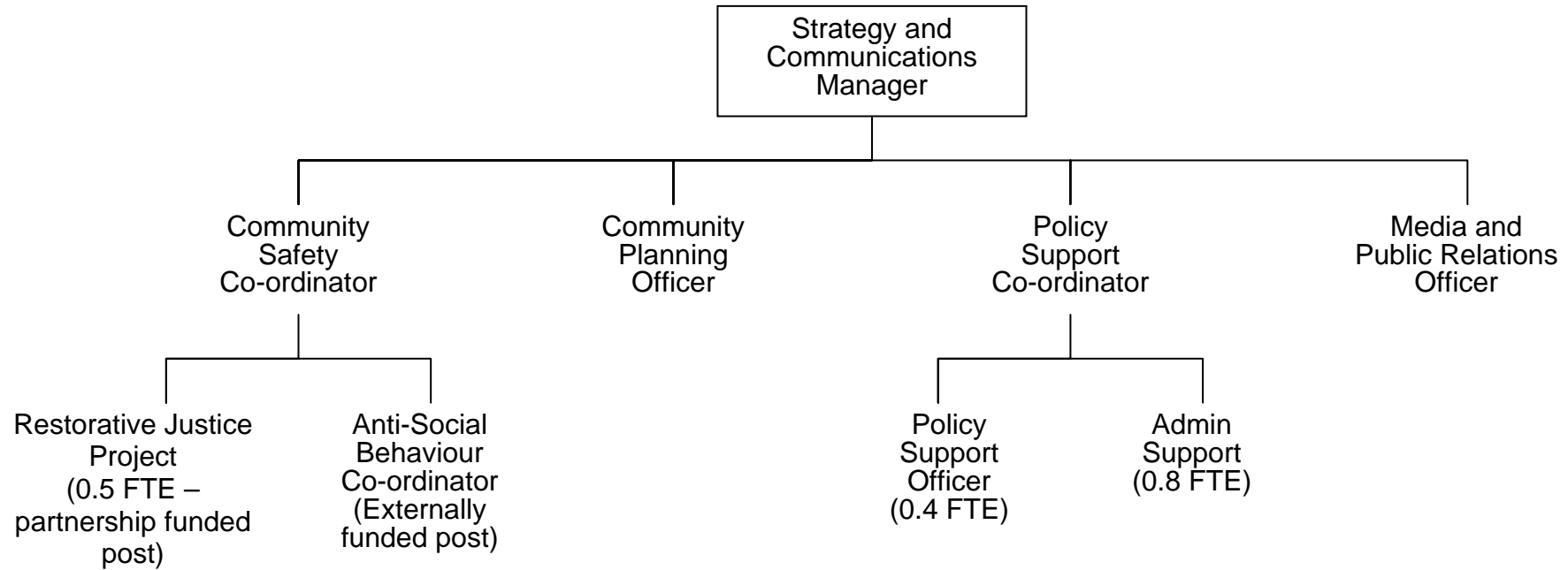
Appendix C – Forward Plan Structure



Appendix C – Client and Retained Services Structure



Appendix C – Structure Chart for Strategy and Communications Service



Appendix D

STRATEGY AND CORPORATE THEME – PROPOSED STRUCTURE

Strategy Manager	Performance and Client Manager	Legal and Democratic Services Manager (Tonya Meers)
4 FTE Strategy leads responsible for:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Corporate Strategy- Forward Plan/LDF- Community Strategy- Local Area Agreement- Housing Strategy- Sports Strategy- Equality Strategy- Climate Change- Communications	3 FTE Performance and Client leads Responsible for:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Performance Monitoring, Management & Improvement- Inspection (inc CAA)- Partnership client (eg: SWOne, Tone, SWP)- Retained finance. HR & Organisational Development	Structure remains as currently organised
6 FTE Strategy Officers PR and Marketing Officer (Debbie Rundle)	2 FTE Performance and Client Officers	
3 FTE Support Staff		

APPENDIX E

CORE COUNCIL REVIEW - SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES AND AREAS OF CONCERN RAISED DURING CONSULTATION

General Introduction

Tables 1 and 2 below provide a summary of main issues and areas of concern raised during the consultation process. Many of these issues are addressed in answers to the Frequently Asked Questions attached as Appendix F. Others will be addressed at the Executive meeting on 4 February 2009.

Table 1: Issues raised by Overview and Scrutiny Board on 22 January 2009

The O&S Board agreed to support the proposal in principle, and the following points were made during the debate:

Ref.	Issue/Area of Concern	Details
O&S 1.	Loss of specialist knowledge and expertise	<p>This concern was expressed particularly in relation to the Forward Plan team, the delivery of the Local Development Framework and associated work. Capacity and expertise would be required on a number of fronts, such as completing the LDF Core Strategy, dealing with examinations in public, delivering Taunton's 'Growth Point' status and wider Project Taunton proposals. Future levels of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (H&PDG) also depended on planning expertise.</p> <p>To help address the above concerns, the Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to ask the Executive to consider an additional Strategy Lead post.</p>
O&S 2.	Phasing	<p>This related to the approach being taken to develop and structure each theme in its entirety, from manager level down, before moving on to the next theme. Members noted that the approach may result in loss of skills to the authority that might have been valuable when developing other themes in later phases.</p>
O&S 3.	One-off costs of implementation	<p>This concern related to the lack of certainty at this time on the one-off costs associated with implementing the Strategy and Corporate theme. The same concern also applied to the costs associated with implementing other themes during 2009.</p>
O&S 4.	Cost of specialist and/or consultancy advice	<p>A view was expressed that the Council could look to reduce spend on specialist advice and consultancy, avoiding the need to reduce established staffing numbers.</p>
O&S 5.	Pace of Implementation	<p>This concern centred on the speed and deliverability of the review, particularly in relation to the first phase (Strategy and Corporate).</p>

Appendix E cont/d

Table 2: Issues raised by staff

The majority of questions raised by staff over the course of the Core Council Review are captured in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documentation attached as Appendix F. A number of written responses have also been received since the start of the formal consultation on the Review. The main areas of concern raised in these latter responses are outlined in the table below.

A pack containing individual staff responses (anonymised) is available upon request from Brendan Cleere – Strategic Director.

Ref.	Issue/Area of Concern	Details
Staff 1.	Loss of capacity and specialist expertise	<p>Similar concerns as described in O&S 1 in the previous table.</p> <p>Concern that thematic working will result in a loss of specialist expertise, such as housing strategy and forward planning.</p>
Staff 2.	Standards of service	<p>The stated reduction in standard of service from 'excellent' to 'good' lacks rigour and requires further explanation.</p> <p>Is a lesser standard of service acceptable to our customers? Staff pride themselves on delivering to a 'gold standard'.</p> <p>Concern that budget constraints will determine members' priorities on future levels of service.</p> <p>Concern that budget constraints appear to be the driving force rather than quality of service..</p>
Staff 3.	Placement of functions within themes	<p>To 'compartmentalise' the Forward Plan function within the Strategy and Corporate theme is illogical and simplistic. There are close links to other themes, particularly Growth and Development, which risk being lost.</p> <p>Dividing the Housing service across different themes will send a message to external bodies (eg Audit Commission) that commitment to that service has weakened.</p> <p>Concern about the relationship between portfolio holders and the four themes. There is potential for the importance and priority given to Housing will be weakened.</p>
Staff 4.	Phasing	<p>Concern that the timetable for phase 1 is shorter than for subsequent phases of the review. It would be more logical, and fairer, to implement the whole review in one go.</p>

Ref.	Issue/Area of Concern	Details
		Concern that the reduced staffing proposed in the Strategy and Corporate theme is a 'template' for other themes. Concern expressed that this will leave little flexibility to deal with sickness and holiday absence and reduce capacity to deliver services.
Staff 5.	Pace of Implementation	Similar to item 4 above. There is concern that the proposals are being rushed to meet the budget setting timetable.
Staff 6.	Lack of detailed job descriptions and other staff/employment issues	<p>The lack of detailed job descriptions makes it difficult to properly assess the pros and cons of the proposal, and options for individuals to consider during the recruitment stage.</p> <p>The report did not explore the potential for reduced hours as a means of protecting jobs.</p> <p>Jobs that are ring-fenced should firstly be available only for staff within that ring-fence. Only if the posts are not filled should they be opened up to other at risk staff.</p> <p>Concerns about staff morale during restructure and as a result of services possibly being delivered to a lesser standard.</p> <p>Concern that voluntary redundancies have not been fully explored and that 'vertical' phasing will not allow this to happen.</p> <p>Proposal not to offer pay protection through the Core Council Review appears counter to TDBC Redundancy Policy.</p>
Staff 7	The consultation process	Concerns included the speed of the consultation, the short period of time (2 days) between the consultation closing date and Full Council and the lack of other options for members to consider in the proposal.
Staff 8	Thematic/Project Working	A concern that 'the day job' will not get done with an increased emphasis on thematic, partnership and project based working. Partnership working will only be successful if other agencies adopt this approach alongside TDBC.
Staff 9	Alternative Options	<p>Have outsourcing options been considered? Will these feature in later phases of the review?</p> <p>We should reduce spend on consultants and outsourcing arrangements and bring services back in house.</p>

Appendix E cont/d

Initial Response from Taunton Deane UNISON

The following letter was tabled at the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 22 January 2009.

Taunton Deane Unison

Overview and Scrutiny Panel 22 January 2009

Initial Response to consultation: Core Council Review (CCR)

Thank you for allowing Unison to present this response to you, prior to your discussion of this item. Where you have a copy of the Core Council Proposals, any reference made in this paper should equate to that in your report.

The CCR is the most far - reaching change that this Authority has undertaken for many years, therefore it is important that any decisions you make are sound and are based on a thorough understanding of how Taunton Deane expects to perform its statutory duties and its provision of services for the medium term future.

The overall proposal is to create 'Themes' as shown in Appendix B of the report, with Theme 1 to be created and populated by 31 March 2009. Unison have stated from the outset that the timeframe is very short, therefore combined with the 'day job' of all staff, to have adequate and meaningful consultation with the Authority is posing a serious challenge to Unison and its members.

Taunton Deane BC has always prided itself on being a 'lean and mean' authority and in past years has steadily reduced its staff establishment, often by removing high level management posts, specialist posts and 'frozen posts' to meet budget deficits, as well as making monetary savings within Service Units.

Remaining staff have stepped up to the mark to maintain the level of service we have today, however, it is Unison's view that this high level of service cannot continue.

This has been acknowledged by CMT in the report, with a proposed reduction in the level of service provision at para 5.53, however for the future, Local Area Assessment's, in particular Organisational Assessments will determine performance of the Authority, not a Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) which was last fully undertaken in 2004. Taunton Deane has been through many staff reductions since then, so Unison view it as aspirational to think service level can be varied where desired, given the aim to reduce resources across the Phases.

Unison Concerns

The main concerns raised with Unison thus far are that should the staffing reduction as proposed in Phase 1 go ahead, the requirement for Taunton Deane to meet its own and Governmental targets, the creation of Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA); Local Development Frameworks (LDF) and local targets of Project Taunton and Pioneer Somerset, etc, will be severely curtailed; our performance and the ability to rapidly react will impact on issues of local importance, (eg. as raised

in Para 5.54, which have brought revenue into Taunton Deane or defended the locality against government aspirations) and this is without considering the current global economic crisis. With a depletion of our staff resource, priority response and deadlines may require the use of more consultancy specialists at additional high cost, or will weaken our ability to enter into meaningful high level negotiations with appropriate weight.

Unison have always opposed compulsory redundancy, have worked regularly with the Authority to prevent this and will continue to do so, however it appears from the report that there will be limited opportunity for some staff to be redeployed, given that any potential vacancies in the later themes will not be available to some of those staff currently 'At Risk' of redundancy.

Unison Proposals and items for Consideration

Members are requested to consider :

- The ability of Planning and Housing to be holistic services. Forward Plan are in Phase 1 and Development Control are in Phase 2. It is our information that both units currently inform each other on the majority of aspects that the Council and Government require as policy. The work carried out by Forward Plan with agencies such as Government Office South West and initiatives like the Regional Spatial Strategy have a major influence on how this is practically enabled at the Development Control level.

Likewise Housing Strategy (Phase 1) and Housing Operations (Phase 4). Both Units influence and inform the other. Indeed much of the project work carried out by the Strategy staff (eg Choice Based Lettings (CBL) and Supporting People) generates significant funding for the Authority to meet its statutory functions, which are implemented by Housing Operations in these client areas.

At present there is also the added income through CBL of revenue generated through partnership working with the other Somerset councils, procured via the Housing Strategy Unit.

Unison maintain that separation and reduction of the above will dramatically reduce the Council's capacity to meet government targets, address local issues or generate income.

- That the use and cost of specialist consultants across the Authority is researched and reported in to you detail, prior to any final decision by Full Council. There is no indication in this report that consultants are used by Units in Phase 1, but they are and there is considerable cost involved. It is Unison's projection that much of this work could be retained in house, using the staff who are currently 'At Risk' and retaining the expertise that will surely be needed in the future.

It is acknowledged, however that without knowing this hidden cost, it is difficult to make an informed choice. Therefore it is surely worth delaying an irreversible decision until that information is available.

Unison Proposals and items for Consideration (cont)

- That there may be an option to reduce hours across the Authority, thereby reducing cost, providing the needed savings, but retaining the expertise, the local knowledge and give the flexibility to increase hours or second staff to special projects within the remit of Taunton Deane and its future partners, when this is needed. Unison is willing to have this discussion on behalf of its members.

It must be remembered that Pioneer Somerset is targeted at forming partnerships within Somerset instead of the creation of a Unitary Somerset. Retaining the flexibility to be a major partnership player must be advantageous to Taunton Deane. Recruiting lost capacity and experience is an expensive and time consuming exercise.

- The estimate in para 10.5 indicates some £300k to £1.2 m in lost General Fund Reserves. If all options put forward following release of this report, including those above are fully investigated, there is a strong likelihood that this sum can be reduced.
- That due regard is given to the accuracy or otherwise of the attached structure charts: these are not always automatically updated and the current population may be significantly different to that indicated in the appendices (ie some structure numbers may already be less than that printed)

This is the first formal response from Taunton Deane Unison and we will continue to respond to proposals throughout the CCR, discussing forthcoming items with the Authority. We are fully prepared to have dialogue with Elected Members representatives, should this be considered worthwhile and informative to the decision making process.

Unison request you thoroughly consider this presentation alongside all the other information on this proposal.

Thank you for listening.

Ian McCulloch
Branch Chair and Service Conditions
Taunton Deane Unison
22 January 2009

APPENDIX F

The Core Council Review – FAQ's

Set out below are a number of frequently asked questions to help you understand a range of issues associated with the Core Council Review.

As the Review progresses there will be more questions which need to be answered and some of those already answered will need to be updated. If you have a question which is not here then please forward your question by e-mail to Linda Kirchin, HR Officer or ask your manager to ensure that your question is registered.

Many of these questions were taken from staff at recent staff briefings and others are based on our policies and procedures. Copies of the Council's Redundancy Policy and Compensation Policy are available on the intranet.

The Council will look to undertake the Core Council Review with due regard to its policies and procedures and its duties as a reputable employer. This will be done through proper consultation and providing support to our employees which includes independent counselling through Carefirst.

The Core Council Review is just one element of our 'change programme' and the review will take account of the other projects within that programme. As the review progresses we will ensure that the expected benefits of those elements are reflected in the Core Council.

If you have issues you would like to raise or questions which you would like answered then these can be raised with any of the following people:

- Your Manager
- Penny James, Chief Executive
- Brendan Cleere, Project Director, Ext 2580
- Linda Kirchin, HR Officer, Ext 2213
- UNISON representatives detailed below or e-mail UNISON@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Ian McCulloch, Ext 2800 or Direct Dial 356342
Philip Bisatt, Ext 2383 or Direct Dial 356305
Caroline Corfe, Ext 2755 or Direct Dial 356521
Jayne Hares, Ext 2644 or Direct Dial 356591
David Harrison, Ext 2633 or Direct Dial 356330
Joanne Toogood, Ext 2806 or Direct Dial 356406
Julie Watson, Ext 2497 or Direct Dial 356341

- Staffside

Andrew Hopkins, Direct Dial 336344

General

Why are we doing this review?

There are two fundamental reasons. The first is to position the Council to meet the challenges that lie ahead of local government, namely an enhanced 'place shaping role', a requirement to place the citizen and the community at the heart of what we do and to take advantage of the opportunities afforded through partnerships (including Pioneer Somerset) and commissioning.

Secondly we need to close the significant budget gap for 2009/10 and beyond. The Core Council Review is one of the ways in which this gap will be closed.

What are we trying to achieve?

As outlined above, the closure of a budget gap but as importantly we are trying to build a flexible, ambitious Council that can respond quickly and effectively to the needs of the communities that we are here to serve.

We are also aiming to ensure that the expected benefits and new ways of working identified in the Change Projects are built into the Core Council.

What is the 'core council'?

The Core Council refers to all services and staff who have not transferred or seconded to a separate delivery organisation.

Separate delivery organisations include Southwest One, Somerset Waste Partnership and South West Audit Partnership.

All services and staff of the core Council are included within the scope of this review.

What does this personally mean for me?

We are not yet in a position to answer this question for all staff, but we fully appreciate the need to provide this clarity and remove uncertainty as soon as possible. For the majority of staff there will be change but with many roles and responsibilities remaining largely the same. A smaller number of staff will have more significant changes to their roles and responsibilities – where this is the case, the necessary management advice and support will be provided to help people with these changes.

The Core Council Review report which will be considered by Full Council on 17 February 2009 sets out details of how the review will be phased and the timetable for the completion of the phases.

If you are not in the first phase (Strategy and Corporate) you will be allocated to a later phase and details will be provided on the intranet by Friday 24 January.

Any queries relating to the list of staff should be notified to Linda Kirchin in Human Resources.

If this is about efficiencies then how many posts do you need to lose?

Efficiencies do not necessarily mean the loss of posts. Efficiencies can be generated through better working, reviewing processes, through partnership working, through outsourcing where it's appropriate to do so and through maximising income opportunities.

However the Core Council Review will see a reduction in staffing levels and this will be done through consultation and by using the appropriate HR policies and procedures.

Are any specific departments or services going to be stopped?

As the Core Council Review progresses we will continue to review the services that we provide but no decisions have been taken on whether there are services that we are going to discontinue. It is true to say that we need to challenge why we are delivering each and every service.

Has the review been finalised or is there really room for change?

The proposals for the first phase of the Review have been set out in the report to members but these proposals are subject to consultation with UNISON and staff. Dependant on this consultation changes can still be made. The consultation period ends on the 15 February 2009.

Is this consultation or communication?

Both.

There are times when we wish to communicate progress or our 'thinking' to date and there are times when staff and Members need to have an input into the process in terms of direction. A number of staff are involved through the UNISON Change Forum and there is also a Project Delivery Team and a Members Steering Group.

How do we feed our views into the process?

There are different ways in which this can be done:

Attend staff briefing sessions.

Ask your Manager to explain what is outlined on a monthly basis in the Core Brief.

Speak to Penny James, Chief Executive or Brendan Cleere, Project Director for the review.

Ask your UNISON representatives and UNISON and Staffside members that attend the UNISON Change Forum.

Raise any concerns or views with Linda Kirchin,, HR Officer, which can be done in a confidential manner.

What is the UNISON Change Forum?

It's a small group of staff who are representing the views of the Union Members in the process.

With the agreement of UNISON the Forum has also been extended to include Staffside representatives.

What if we are not in a union?

The UNISON Change Forum has recently been extended to include Staffside representatives to ensure that all staff are covered.

Concerns or issues can also be raised by speaking to your manager or the HR Manager.

Monthly updates will also be in the Core Brief

What is the timetable?

The outcomes of the Review must feed into the 2009/10 budget setting process which concludes in February 2009. The Executive will consider recommendations on the Core Council Review in the new year and it is expected that staff will know the new structure as soon as members are happy for it to be released.

Implementation of the new core Council may need to be phased over several stages. The first phase is the Strategy and Corporate theme, if you are affected by the changes to this theme you will have been notified by 14 January 2009.

The Core Council Review report will be considered at Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 22 January. This report will be considered at the Executive meeting on 4 February and the Full Council on 17 February 2009. If approval for the proposals is given at this meeting then the recruitment and selection for the new posts in the new structure will begin.

Any views which staff or UNISON wish to make can be fed in until 15 February 2009 to allow Members to take these into account.

When will I know if my job is 'at risk'?

In early January 2009 the proposals for the Core Council Review will be known and at this stage formal consultation with UNISON will take place and staff who are 'at risk' will be notified in writing. If you are 'at risk' in the first phase of the restructure in the Strategy and Corporate theme you will be notified before 14 January 2009.

Consultation with staff who are affected will take place during January and February 2009 until such time as the final report is considered by Council on 17 February 2009.

What does 'at risk' mean?

This means that your posts has been identified as being potentially affected by redundancy.

Employees that are 'at risk' have certain rights this includes ringfence protection for new posts within the new structure. You will be notified which posts you have been ringfenced for.

'At risk' employees also receive priority consideration for any vacancy throughout the 'Core Council'. They are also eligible for reasonable time off to seek alternative employment, prepare CVs, apply for jobs etc

When will we know the final structure?

The overall move to a Theme based approach and the detailed structure for Strategy and Corporate will be considered by Full Council on 17 February 2009.

Is the Core Council Review finance driven or customer service driven?

It's actually driven by both the need to make the Council 'fit for the future' and to close the significant budget gap that exists for 2009/10 and beyond.

What is the balance of the staff going to be like, will it be all managers and no front line staff?

The final structure has yet to be decided but in order to deliver services to the communities that we serve it is essential that we have the right balance of managers and 'front line' staff.

Are we still aiming to be an excellent Council?

The requirement to save money in the 2009/10 budget and in the years to come has meant that the Core Council Review proposals accept that it will not be possible to provide all services to the current excellent standard.

Members will need to determine appropriate service standards across the Council and staffing resources will need to reflect these standards..

We will continue to strive to be the best that we can be.

In future the Council will be judged as part of the wider Comprehensive Area Assessment rather than the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. This new assessment provides a framework on which the 'outcomes' delivered by public services in Somerset will be judged and on which Taunton Deane Borough Council as an organisation will be assessed.

Are we looking to provide a 'gold star' service?

We are seeking to provide services to the level requested and required by the communities that we serve. This may mean that some services are delivered at 'a different level' to others.

It's true to say that we cannot afford to provide every service to a so called 'gold standard'.

What will be the effect on services dealing with customers?

All services 'deal with customers' either directly or indirectly. All services are part of the review and therefore services that 'deal' with customers will be affected.

Will it mean job cuts?

Yes. There will be fewer staff in the Council in April 2009 than is the case now. In line with existing policies redundancies will be 'voluntary' in the first instance.

A few years ago some services received heavier cuts than other services. Is this likely to happen again or will the cuts be made more evenly across the core council?

The Core Council review is not about making 'proportionate' cuts depending on whether services are in the 'invest, disinvest or maintain' categories. It is about positioning the Council to meet the challenges ahead of us. The restructure has this as the main goal and whilst it will consider which services are currently placed in each category it is not seeking as a major outcome to apportion 'cuts'.

Does this review resolve any future budget issues or will there be a need to repeat this again in a few years time?

The Review cannot predict future financial challenges, it can only recommend a structure that puts us in the best possible position to minimise the effect of such challenges.

Where will we be based?

There is no change of work location proposed in the Core Council Review but the development of Pioneer Somerset and Locality Based Working initiatives may change this in the future.

In December 2006 staff were told that Deane House was not 'fit for purpose' is that still the case?

The future of all Council assets remains a 'live issue'. The review will make no comment regarding leaving Deane House.

Is there a minimum number of services or staff determined for core council?

No. We require as many staff and services as it takes to deliver what our communities identify as priorities.

Redundancy and Selection

Can staff volunteer to be made redundant?

The issue of redundancy is strictly governed by employment legislation as well as our own TDBC HR policies. We will follow these policies in dealing with redundancies and in line with TDBC policies we would seek volunteers for redundancy before any compulsory redundancies.

Employees who are identified 'at risk' will be offered the opportunity of redundancy following the Full Council meeting on 17 February 2009.

If you are interested in volunteering for redundancy please contact Linda Kirchin, HR Officer..

Is it volunteers first?

Any staff who volunteer will have their requests considered by the Council to determine the impacts on the Council from approving such a request. Staff should understand that the Council has the right to refuse requests for voluntary redundancy.

Who can tell me how much redundancy pay and pension benefits I am due?

The HR Section can work out these figures but at this stage we would ask that requests are only made when further detailed information of the Core Council Review is made available.

All staff that are identified as being 'at risk' and who may be made redundant will be provided this information at the earliest opportunity.

In brief the Council's policy on Redundancy payments is that they are in accordance with statutory redundancy payments. With effect from 1 April 2007 the Council has exercised discretion under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006, to make compensatory payments to employees being made redundant based on a multiplier of three times the number of weeks an employee would be entitled to under statutory redundancy formula, inclusive of any statutory redundancy payment up to a maximum of 90 weeks' pay.

The Compensation Policy is on the CCR Intranet site.

What support will TDBC give to staff that are made redundant?

We will follow TDBC redundancy policies and staff will receive support in line with such policies which will include redeployment, retraining, reasonable time-off to find alternative work, support with application forms and CVs as well as liaising with other Council's and employers in the area with regard to alternative employment. [Hyperlink to care and support leaflet.](#)

All staff are entitled to contact Care First a confidential and independent counselling, information and advice on 0800 174319.

If I am appointed to a new post that it is a lower grade to my current post, will I get salary protection?

The proposal is that as part of the Core Council Review salary protection is not given to employees that are appointed to a post at a lower grade.

Will you pay for me to be retrained?

The Council will follow adopted policies and, in line with such policies, if a post is made redundant then the postholder may be offered a role elsewhere in the organisation. In such circumstances training and support will be provided.

If you are made redundant then the Council will provide advice and assistance in identifying retraining opportunities.

Will staff be offered jobs in SW1 or other delivery organisations?

There is no obligation for any of the other delivery organisations to automatically employ any staff that are made redundant as a result of the CCR. However discussions are ongoing with SW1 as a major partner, to ensure that any opportunities are made available.

Further details will be provided in the near future.

Who agrees to the groups of staff affected?

The Review is aiming to provide a structure that makes the Core Council 'fit for purpose'. All Core Council services and all Core Council staff are within the scope of the review. The final decision regarding the structure will lie with Members who will be advised by CMT.

The proposals being made by CMT for member consideration will be fully consulted on with UNISON and this will include details of the ring fence arrangements, staff within each ring fence and the arrangements for appointing to posts.

What are the selection criteria?

Employees who are identified as 'at risk' of redundancy will be notified of the posts that they are ringfenced to apply for. Job descriptions will be circulated to those affected as soon as they are available. Selection for new posts will be via a competency-based interview, which aims to match candidates skills and behaviours to the requirements of the post and the team.

What is a Competency?

A competency is a behaviour or skill that an individual should possess in order to be successful in a job role. An example might be: Interpersonal skills – for managers and anyone dealing with people to enable them to communicate and build relationships effectively and deal with potential conflict.

What are competency-based interviews

These are interviews where the questions candidates are asked seek information about how the candidate's skill and behaviour matches the competencies defined as necessary to perform the job effectively. Typically the interview is structured and candidates will often be asked to describe actual situations they have experienced and how they dealt with them.

For instance a candidate may be asked to give an example of how they have dealt with a difficult customer or colleague in a previous job role rather than just describing, generally, their style or attitude to difficult people situations.

If a competency basis is going to be used for an interview process candidates will be made fully aware before the interview what the competencies for the job are.

Will it impact on all levels of staff?

All services and all staff within the Core Council are within the scope of the Review and further details will be provided to staff when the impacts are known.

Are any services exempt?

Yes, Tone Leisure, Southwest One, Somerset Waste Partnership and South West Audit Partnership.

APPENDIX F cont/d

Questions from the All Staff Briefings of Friday 14th Jan 2009

Q1 Can you clarify the redundancy policy and formula?

A1 Yes, we will put a definitive doc on the CCR site

Q2 When will individual redundancy figures be available for everyone?

A2 We will clarify the policy and formula for all as above, and then we will focus on individual request for those immediately affected by the initial proposal. At that point we will begin to handle any individual requests giving priority to those in the next phase.

Q3 Why can't you use the reserves you plan to spend on the restructure to fund the budget gap?

A3 The savings from the restructure are ongoing year by year savings and with reserve you can only spend a £1 once. The hit on reserves is likely to be somewhere in the middle, so using them would only solve the budget problem for around two years.

Q4 Will the consultation process be the same for each phase?

A4 Yes, this time we are consulting on the whole phase and the specific strategy and corporate proposal. We will consult on each theme proposal as it unfolds in the same way and each proposal will go through scrutiny, the Executive and to Full Council for approval.

Q5 Will the amount of reserves available effect who gets recruited to the new jobs?

A5 No, there are enough reserves available to cover any outcome. Reserves have been bolstered recently and there is another report to the same meeting of Overview and Scrutiny covering this.

Q6 What if I am on holiday when my theme is being recruited too?

A6 There will be plenty of notice about any recruitment activity and those affected by the S and C theme have a detailed timetable already. We will do our best to accommodate people and at least to enable you to make choices between holiday commitments and recruitment activities.

Q7 Where does Housing Options sit?

A7 It sits in Operations and Regulation alongside private sector housing and housing standards.

Q8 Can people apply for voluntary redundancy from other theme areas?

A8 We are not asking people to do this. If any individual is interested in voluntary redundancy or early retirement they should approach their Manager and/or HR. Each case will be looked at on its merits. The reason for this is that the Review is not solely budget driven and there will be certain skills and experiences that we will continue to need in the future. Giving priority to voluntary redundancies does not allow us to move forward in a planned way.

Q9 Why is the Reviewed phased?

A9 the Review is a major organisational change and has to be planned in a manageable way. It is about logistics more than anything and the need to complete the whole as soon as we reasonably can as we acknowledge that the phasing will cause on going uncertainty.

Q10 What is the rationale for the order in which each theme will be looked at?

A10 Members asked us to look at Strategy and Corporate first. The rest follows a logical order which has been discussed with members.

Q11 Will there be consultation on each theme?

A11 Yes, see A4 above

Q12 What is the number of jobs that will be lost in the whole review?

A12 We do not know. No targets have been set for any of the individual themes or the overall review.

Q13 Will you follow the same process for putting people at risk in future themes?

A13 Yes, if any future proposals effect existing posts then the post holder will, if appropriate, be put at risk in the same way as we have done for those at risk of redundancy from the proposal out to consultation for the Strategy and Corporate theme.

Q14 Do you have enough reserves to fund all of the review?

A14 We only know the reserves requirement for the Strategy and Corporate proposal. We don't know what the impact on reserves will be (if any) on futures proposals but we will have to ensure that any future proposal is affordable.

Q15 Are you looking for a mix of skills in the 'Lead' posts for the Strategy posts in particular?

A15 Yes, a range of strategic functions are going to be delivered by that team and we need to get the skills mix right. The 'Leads' will be senior professionals capable of delivering good quality strategies.

Q16 How does the ring fencing work?

A16 Staff put at risk have been ring fenced to the new posts proposed in the Strategy and Corporate theme which are in a similar organisational position as their existing posts. The Council also has a duty to look at all other vacancies that may come along outside of the Strategy and Corporate theme to see if they too should be included within the ring fence.

Q17 Will SWOne be available to people in the ring fence?

A17 SWOne have no contractual obligation to prioritise any of the Core Council staff at risk above any other applicant. Having said that we have identified this as a possibility and we have begun discussions with SW1. Whilst this is positive we can not guarantee that this will happen.

Q18 Will you consult on each theme?

A18 Yes, see A4

Q19 What is the 'flow' of recruitment?

A19 We will recruit to the Managers jobs first. These will be Member recruitments. We will then recruit to the Leads, then the Officers, and finally to the support staff. This is our plan. If we are unable to recruit fully to any tier we will not wait to get on with recruiting to subsequent tiers.

Q20 Could recruitment go externally if people don't succeed at interview?

A20 Yes, we aim to recruit from the ring fence, if that is not possible we will open the vacancies up internally and dependent on the number of applicants and/or if we don't recruit we will go externally.

Q21 Will unsuccessful applicants be able to go for jobs in other themes?

A21 At this stage people at risk will need to secure a new post within the proposed structure for Strategy and Corporate or take redundancy. They will not be able to stay with the Council until further themes are worked up as there will be no substantive job for them to do.

Q22 Will people in other themes be able to go for jobs in the Strategy and Corporate theme?

A22 No, in the first instance these new posts are ring fenced to those at risk. If at some point they are advertised internally and / or externally then yes, you will be able to apply (see A20 above).

Q23 Will people at a lower grade in the structure be disadvantaged by the flow of recruitment e.g. if a Manager applicant is unsuccessful and 'trickles down' to the lead level?

A23 What you describe as 'trickle down' may have the effect of putting more people into the ring fence for a lower grade job. We simply do not know what this will look like.

There is also a possibility that people in the starting ring fence also opt for redundancy therefore reducing the number of people in any one of the ring fences.

NOTE:

This is an area where detailed consultation is taking place with UNISON and further information will be provided when this consultation has been concluded.

Q24 What do we say to our teams and the public during this change? It is a 'big ask' to expect people to carry on in uncertainty. What happens to current service plans for the year?

A24 We can only deal with what we know. So, whilst we understand that it will be difficult for some people to deliver 'business as usual' this is what we should try our best to do and we should stick to current plans for our services until any future proposal seeks to change or modify that position.

Q25 Is the £342K saving from Strategy and Corporate a 'one off' saving?

A25 No, it is an on-going saving to the Council.

Q26 What level of savings and/or job losses are you looking for?

A26 No targets have been set for savings or jobs (see A12).

Q27 Isn't it silly to not have a savings target for the whole Review? You may under or over deliver. If you over deliver jobs would have been lost unnecessarily?

A27 The review has two drivers both designed to ensure the Council delivers the best it can with the resources it can afford. The starting point with Strategy and Corporate (as it will be with the other themes) is to establish what level of service in each area the Members want to aim for. In Strategy and Corporate this moves us from an excellent standard to a good standard of delivery and the proposal is based on the resources needed to deliver that standard. This produces a saving that will contribute to this year's budget.

Q28 Will each theme be responsible for a geographical area of the Council as shown in the new organisational structure 'wheel' diagram?

A28 No, the diagram is misleading in that respect. It is the Director aligned to each theme that will have a geographical area to lead on. The full report makes that clear.

Q29 When will future phases of recruitment take place, I want to know so that I can plan my holidays?

A29 The report shows the proposed timetable for the other themes and that gives you some idea of what will happen. The detailed recruitment timetable has been done for the first phase. This level of detail (if appropriate) will not be available until we begin to develop proposals for each subsequent phase.

Q30 How will you turn round the consultation from the 15th February in time for it to really inform the Members decision on the 18th February?

A30 We will keep Members informed of the consultation responses received at each stage the proposal is reported to them and we will ensure all 56 Cllr's have it before Full Council.

Q31 What will they do with the budget on the night if they don't agree the proposal?

A31 The Executive will have to propose an alternative to Full Council. There are alternatives that would create an acceptable budget for 2009/10.

Q32 Isn't there a better use of reserves than this i.e. Firepool or plugging the budget gap.

A32 See A3 above

Q33 Can staff come to the Member meetings?

A33 Yes, but you will not be able to stay for the confidential part of the report. We have made the vast majority of the report 'public' to aid consultation. The confidential appendix relates solely to the impact on each individual member of staff and there is no need for any one else to know or have this information.

NOTE:

Due to staff having a prejudicial interest in this matter they would only be able to stay for the presentation of the report and to give any statement should they wish to make.

Q34 How does this proposal relate to Pioneer Somerset? Will we be better positioned?

A34 We remain committed to Pioneer and nothing in the proposal gets in the way of Pioneer type activity continuing.

Q35 What are the targets for the rest of the review? Do you know what you want or what you will save?

A35 See A12 and A26

Q36 Can you clarify the approach to pay protection.

A36 We will not be offering pay protection if anyone chooses to apply and is successful in getting a lower grade post.

Q37 Who will set the priorities for each of the new teams? The Strategy team covers a wide area of functions and work?

- A37 The relevant Manager will need to look at what functions their team has to deliver and will then consider the relevant priorities as expressed by Members. See also A15
- Q38 These aren't really efficiency savings, that is insulting to me. There should be a third aim of the review which is to make cuts.**
- A38 We do not mean to be insulting and we aren't saying everyone is inefficient. What we have done in the Strategy and Corporate area is to propose a reduction in service standards, to propose some things are done in a different way i.e. not having a dedicated Equalities Officer but say that function must be delivered by all Managers, and, to bring posts that are doing similar things i.e. consultation and research together as we do believe that will enable us to be more 'joined up' and will be more efficient.
- Q39 If staff are taking on more responsibility or more work will their JE be reviewed?**
- A39 If staff are direct transfers and are therefore 'slotted in' we are saying their job hasn't changed so there should be no impact on their JE. If people are applying for any new jobs created that job would have the appropriate JE done prior to recruitment.
- Q40 The LDF which is shown in the Strategy and Corporate proposal would be better in the Growth and Development theme to ensure better integration between planning policy and development management. Silos between Housing and Planning has always been a problem in local government.**
- A40 The proposal states what the 'home base' of each service is and we are expecting that people will work across themes to deliver broader agendas such as Affordable Housing.
- Q41 How does the proposal fit with Pioneer and the recent recommendations from the IDeA on how strategic housing should be developed and delivered across Somerset?**
- A41 We are aware of the IDeA report and we are open to the proposals in this report which we believe have not yet been fully adopted by all of the Somerset Councils. With regard to Pioneer see A34
- Q42 Will all of the 4 Strategy Leads be generic or will some be dedicated/specialist roles? You will need some specialist expertise and people to sit on specialist outside bodies.**
- A42 The proposed approach is generic but we accept the importance of professional expertise. See also A15
- Q43 Why are staff in Legal and Democratic Services transferring directly into the proposed new structure?**

A43 This Service was reviewed and restructured recently. Further review of this Service was not considered necessary.