

Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 06 December 2011

Workforce Changes within the Communities Group and the Library and Information Service

Recommendation

That the Committee:

- Considers the position of the Business Units as a result of the loss of posts
- Agrees to monitor the continuing impact upon service delivery
- Advises Cabinet of potential issues or outcomes that may arise due to the deletion of posts from services

1. Background

1.1 Overview and Scrutiny requested a report on the impact of posts deleted. This report (Section 2) details the impact of the staffing reductions and is presented under the Business Unit headings. It provides a breakdown of the posts deleted, the impact that this has had on the particular Service, and also indicates the number of posts that are expected to be removed in the future where applicable.

1.2 It is worth noting that the impact of these posts being removed is difficult to measure in some cases at present, given that their loss is only now taking effect. Some of the savings plans that have been implemented have affected the continuity of the work undertaken; whilst other proposals have been part of an overall service transformation, with a revised service delivery either being implemented, or planned for the future.

2. Impact of Staffing Reductions

2.1 Transport and Highways

| Team | Reason for reductions | No. of staff affected | Impact on Service |
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| Safer Routes to School and Village Speed Limit Review | Reduction in Integrated Transport Capital budget result in Safer Routes to School schemes and review of village speed limits. | 5 posts deleted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews of village speed limits no longer carried out. • Safer Routes to School infrastructure improvements encouraging walking and cycling to school no longer carried out. Small revenue |

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| | | | budget supporting minor works transferred to the Sustainable Travel Team. |
| Sustainable Travel Team | Reduction in Education ABG – 2 grants via Children’s Trust cut completely. | 1 post deleted and 1 currently ‘at risk’. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on WCC’s Green Travel Plan has ceased (following an earlier saving made under the FSD review in 2009). • Work with schools on sustainable travel significantly reduced. |
| Strategic Projects Team | Savings in cost of operating Civil Parking Enforcement | 2.5 posts deleted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews of Traffic Regulation Orders for civil parking enforcement areas reduced. |
| Project Support Team | (1) Reduction in Integrated Transport Capital Budget. (2) Planned savings in cost of operating Civil Parking Enforcement. (3) Minor works budget significantly reduced. | 3 posts deleted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews of Traffic Regulation Orders for civil parking enforcement areas reduced. • Investigation for and delivery of miscellaneous minor traffic management schemes largely ceased. |
| Road Safety Education for Children | No revenue and ABG reduction | 1 post deleted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road Safety Officers providing direct road safety education in schools reduced from 2 to 1. • Cycle training still available but financed by parents or others. • 'Kerbsafe' which was offered to all infant schools now only offered to a limited no. of schools (prioritised on casualty history. Other schools encouraged to continue themselves with materials needed. |
| Safety Cameras | Removal of ABG | Significant reduction in number of Police support staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All fixed cameras on roads where Council is the highway authority are operational though not all the time, and based on the casualty history of the site. • Enforcement ceased at sites where there is community concern about speeding but no significant history of casualties. |
| Road Safety Engineering | Reduction in Integrated Transport Capital Budget for casualty reduction schemes | 1 post deleted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of casualty reduction schemes implemented has been reduced by two thirds |
| Community Transport | Removal of Community Transport Budget. A one-off Central Government grant has allowed the service to continue in its entirety at present, however, the grant is due to | 1 post deleted on 31 August 2011 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in community transport services across the County • Opportunities to liaise with interested parties have been sought with a view to sustaining some of those services that offer a genuine passenger |

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| | cease imminently. | | |
| Adult Specialist Transport | Reductions in transport requirements of AHCS under our Service Level Agreement. It is reasonable to assume that the overall adult specialist transport will continue to reduce. | 14 posts deleted. Consultations on the reduction of contracted hours of staff have so far resulted in a 30% reduction in Atherstone; 12% in Rugby; 10% in Warwick | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in the number of routes by 7 across the County. |
| Design Services | Reduction in capital programme funding for LTP schemes (integrated transport and major projects) | <p>7 staff left in 2009/10 and a further 19 staff left in 2010/11 (majority were Arup or agency staff).</p> <p>1 staff has retired in 2011/12.</p> <p>2 staff due to take early retirement in 2011/12.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significantly reduced delivery of LTP capital highway and bridge schemes. Reduction in amount of non-fee earning work. Staff become more productive as well as more commercially minded. Staff profiles do not match service requirements. A no. of very experienced staff has left or will be leaving; creating a shortage of senior, experienced project engineers. |
| Surveys | Reduction in revenue budget | Traffic Survey team disbanded with loss of 6 permanent staff and approximately 80 casual staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No in-house capability to carry out traffic surveys. Any teams requiring surveys now have to budget for these. Arrangements in place with Leicestershire CC to carry out traffic surveys when required. Schedule of charges agreed. |
| Rights of Way | Reduction in revenue budget | Rights of Way team significantly reduced from 22 to 8 staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service level reduced to comply with statutory minimum requirements. |

2.2 Sustainable Communities

| Team | Reason for reductions | No. of staff affected | Impact on Service |
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| Education Business Partnership | Removal of revenue budget. | 16 posts deleted. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete cessation of Education Business Partnership work with schools Schools are now encouraged to embed Work Related Learning across the Curriculum. |

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| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Experience programme now co-ordinated elsewhere in the Communities Group. |
| Strategic Planning and Development | Budget pressure of £325k. | 4 posts have been deleted through voluntary redundancy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reduction in capacity means the remainder of the Highways Officers are now deal with an increased number of both Section 38 and Development Management cases. • The setting up of legal agreements and their progression now rests with the highway officers. • Frequency and duration of on-site inspections and checks on Section 38 agreements has been scaled back. • New Section 38 Agreements now subject to a 5-6 week lead-in before Technical Approval can be started. • Free pre-application advice for both Planning & Highways ceased. A charging schedule has been introduced for the provision of advice. • At present, the impact on the planning team has been marginally off-set by a reduction in planning application numbers this financial year. When application numbers rise, this will lead to increased caseloads; as well as other planning development management duties, such as enforcement, and site monitoring and Review of Old Mineral Permissions. |
| County Planning | Budget pressure. | 1 post deleted due to retirement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decline in the regional special planning strategy work. • Some elements of the work under the remit of the Local Enterprise Partnership. |
| Regeneration & Funding Projects. | Reduction in revenue budget. | 3 posts deleted (1 x Landscape and 2 x European Transnational). Consultation on the redundancy of | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape - Review of priorities due to less capacity to deliver on a variety of work that contributes to improving the environment and help strengthen the local economy. • Reduced capacity for any new |

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| | | 2 x further posts is currently underway. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Transnational - No longer able to maximise the benefits of EU membership & international engagement to Warwickshire citizens, schools, businesses & organisations. • Reduction in the number and value of external funding bids submitted and approved. • WCC now signposts, where possible, to other organisations for EU funding advice. |
| Economic Development | Reduction in revenue budget. | 3 posts deleted (including 1 x Group Manager) through voluntary redundancy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The posts were removed in the expectation that the Local Enterprise Partnership would comprise some of the core functions of the Economic Development service. |

2.3 Localities and Community Safety

| Team | Reasons for reductions | No. of staff affected | Impact on Service |
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| Trading Standards | Reduction in revenue budget. | 17 posts deleted through a combination of redundancies, retirements and the removal of vacant posts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in front line operational enforcement; including a reduction in the number & extent of business & consumer community campaigns/engagement. • Reduction in proactive work; including consumer & business consultations, business & consumer advice information, illegal money lending advice, Talking Shop in Warwickshire schools, multi agency events, Tradeline, • Reduced support for vulnerable consumers. • Management capacity significantly reduced. |
| Heritage and Cultural Services (HCS) | Reduction in revenue budget. | The transformation of the HCS has resulted in a net loss of 11.5 FTE posts (15.6 lost and 4.1 reconfigured); achieved through a combination of vacancy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Archaeologist support and advice to local groups ceases. • County Archaeologist overview of management of historic environment ceases. • Reduced capacity for museum collections development. |

| Team | Reasons for reductions | No. of staff affected | Impact on Service |
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| | | management, natural turnover and redundancies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree survey work will cease • Environmental health specimen identification ceases. • Environmental Health enquiries will cease. • Small grants to Tourism Association and festival and events cease. • No in-house capacity for design & exhibition work. • Temporary exhibition programme ceased. • In-house site maintenance at St. John's to cease. • Response times for Museum enquiry services increased. • Proactive acquisition of natural history/geology specimens will reduce. • County Records Office enquiry service re-engineered to introduce a chargeable, limited enquiry service. |
| Emergency Planning Unit | Reduction in revenue budget. | 2 posts deleted. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sub-regional emergency management agreement now in place and operational. |
| Localities and Community Safety | Reduction in revenue budget. | 2.5 posts removed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A further restructuring of the Service is planned alongside the work of the Member Group on 'Partnership Landscapes'. |
| Improvement and Development Team | Savings target of £27k to be met. | 1 post deleted. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal of the EcoSchools and Sustainable Schools Programme in Warwickshire. |

2.4 Library and Information Service

| Team | Reasons for reductions | No. of staff affected | Impact on Service |
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| Library & Information Service | Reduction in revenue budget. | 41 staff (Total headcount) redundant in 2011/12. (A minimum of 7 and 3 anticipated in years 2012/13 and 2013/14 respectively) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation regarding proposed changes to the library provision is still on-going. • From 1 April 2012, 14 libraries are to be run by local communities with some support from WCC. A further 2 libraries to be closed, and to potentially receive a mobile |

| Team | Reasons for reductions | No. of staff affected | Impact on Service |
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| | | | <p>service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening hours will be reduced considerably from 1 April 2012, which is likely to impact on usage. • Workforce plan is being developed to minimise the impact of the loss of specialist knowledge and experience. • Self-service technology has been introduced to enable peak demand to be managed effectively and to transfer staff time to supporting the customer. • Integrated working with Warwickshire Direct, the use of volunteers, and sub-regional working are strategies being implemented to build capacity within the Service. |

Strategic Director: Monica Fogarty

Heads of Service: Graeme Fitton, Louise Wall, Mark Ryder, Kushal Birla

Report Author: Andy Dunn

Portfolio Holders: Cllr Colin Hayfield, Cllr Richard Hobbs, Cllr Alan Cockburn, Cllr Peter Butlin, Cllr Bob Stevens.