

CABINET – 18 NOVEMBER 2002

## SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Given the severe financial constraints on local authorities, particularly in the South, there is a continuing need to look at all aspects of the Council's activities for potential savings. The departure of two of the five Heads of Service from the Environment Services Directorate – one to the new Joint Commercial Services Directorate with Test Valley Borough Council, one to a senior post elsewhere, have questioned the viability of the Environment Services Directorate and provided an opportunity to review the senior management structure. After discussion, the Director of Environment Services has agreed to accept redundancy on terms set out in the confidential paper on this agenda.
- 1.2 I would like to thank the Director, Liz Malcolm, for her contribution to New Forest District Council. Liz has always exhibited the highest standards of professional conduct. She has successfully led a number of major projects and through her work for the Council and partner bodies, such as the New Forest Committee, has done much to champion the cause of sustainability and preserve the unique environment of the area. I am sure that Members and Officers will join me in wishing her well.

### 2. FUTURE DIRECTION OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT

- 2.1 In reviewing the future shape and direction of the senior management of the authority, it is important to consider not just the tight external financial constraints but also the need to deliver the positive policy agenda of the Council. The Heart of the Forest sets out a clear commitment to continuous improvement and the delivery of excellent services. It also lays out a leading role for the Council in the New Forest Local Strategic Partnership, aimed at enhancing the quality of life of people of the District.
- 2.2 We will be delivering on these aims against a background of considerable change, including the development of:
- new ways of supporting elected members as the full implications of the new constitutional arrangements become clear
  - new ways of meeting the needs of clients and customers as new technology offers greater choice of access
  - new ways of working with partners to establish community needs and respond to them
  - the likely introduction of a National Park authority and new mechanisms for delivering services, eg Joint Commercial Services

- 2.3 If the senior management of the authority is to be successful in both shaping and responding to these changes, it will itself need to change. A good start has already been made in moving away from a hierarchical structure which concentrated on the Corporate Management Team and which worked mainly through Directorate processes. The Heads of Services and other senior managers are increasingly involved in corporate decision-making about future strategy. An important example of this is the work underway to develop an improved performance management framework. Officers are working more as part of networks with partners in other organisations to help meet the public needs. These trends will continue as new patterns of working mature. However, it is the New Forest way that this be an evolution rather than a revolution.
- 2.4 I do not therefore propose a radical restructuring. A limited change in structures will provide as much stability and continuity as possible, while encouraging the development of the attitudes necessary to move the organisation forward. This is particularly so because we do not yet know how some of the trends and issues outlined above will develop, eg the resolution of the National Park Inquiry.

### **3. THE PROPOSED STRUCTURE**

- 3.1 It is proposed that the functions of the Environment Services Directorate be divided between the Community Services and Resources Directorates. The Council's planning functions will become part of Community Services; the technical and consultancy functions will become part of the Resources Directorate. This will affect the three remaining Environment Heads of Service as follows: The Heads of Development Control and Policy Design & Information will become part of Community Services. The Head of Consultancy Services will become part of Resources. The Chief Executive's Department, which was restructured last year, will remain unchanged.
- 3.2 This revised structure should set up the authority well to respond to the changes outlined above. It will also have the following specific advantages:
- it will bring Housing and Planning functions within one Directorate, assisting in one of the Council's key priorities of encouraging affordable housing in the district
  - it will bring valuation and property services closer together with other aspects of asset management in the Resources Directorate
  - it makes sense in terms of the split of services between the two main offices of the authority. The Town Hall at Lymington will be almost completely occupied by one Directorate (Resources)
- 3.3 There will be a limited number of issues arising from the restructuring which require further consideration. There will be a need to consider the support arrangements for the revised structure. This work will be informed by the recent Best Value review of directorate support. There is work already underway to look at the best location for some of the Public Services functions. Any further changes will be implemented by the Director and Heads of Service concerned after full consultation with all those affected. The role of economic development is also already under review and proposals will be brought before the Cabinet shortly.

- 3.4 There will need to be a transfer of the delegations of the Director of Environment Services. Initially it is proposed that these should transfer to the relevant Director. Any further changes will be brought back to the Council for consideration.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The full financial implications are set out in the Agenda Item 3 Report B (Private) on the redundancy of the Director of Environment Services. Once the initial outlay is recovered, direct savings equate to around £80,000 per annum.

#### **5. CRIME AND DISORDER AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None arising directly from this report.

#### **6. EMPLOYEE SIDE COMMENTS**

- 6.1 To follow.

#### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 That Cabinet approve the restructuring of the senior management of the Authority as set out in this report, subject to Council approval of recommendation 7.2;
- 7.2 That Cabinet recommends to Council the redundancy of the Director of Environment Services on the terms set out in Agenda Item 3 Report 'B' (Private);
- 7.3 Subject to the Council agreeing the recommendations contained in this report those delegations that fall within the remit of the Cabinet be amended by transferring powers currently delegated to the Director of Community Services and Director of Resources, as appropriate;
- 7.4 That Cabinet recommends to Council that the delegations of the Director of Environment Services that are not the responsibility of the Cabinet be transferred to the Directors of Community Services and Resources, as appropriate.

#### **For Further Information:**

Dave Yates  
Chief Executive  
Tel: (023) 8028 5477  
E-mail: dave.yates@nfdc.gov.uk

#### **Background Papers:**

None

DY/MJ/12.11.02