

# CABINET

## OUTLINE PROPOSALS FOR SERVICE REVIEW: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICE 5 November 2013

### Report of Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning)

PURPOSE OF REPORT			
To obtain Cabinet's agreement for the scope of detailed review work needed to present the Council with savings options.			
Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Referral from Officers			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Date of notice of forthcoming key decision	N/A		
This report is public			

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR JANICE HANSON

- (1) That Cabinet agrees that the areas to be reviewed in the Regeneration and Planning Service are :
  - Strategic Management of the visitor economy
  - Commissioned activities supporting the visitor economy
  - The provision of events
  - Visitor Information centres
  - Council operated venues
  - Communications and Marketing.
  
- (2) That the Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning) reviews the options available to reduce engagement in Regeneration Projects and Economic Development, after assessing what the impact would be on the economic well being of the district and the ability of the Council to engage with the LEP.

- (3) That the Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning) be instructed to commence detailed work on the review in these areas together with appropriate Chief Officer support from Management Team.
- (4) That a report be prepared for Cabinet containing worked up options for savings.

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 **Regeneration and Planning:** The service includes a number of statutory functions which were the subject of review and service reductions in April 2010. These are regularly refined and are mainly operating to capacity and experiencing increased workload. No major reductions to these services are proposed apart from some rationalizing of managerial posts enabling savings to be made in other service areas, and pilot arrangements being made to share Building Control operations with South Lakeland District Council. Options for any efficiencies or similar measures (through reviewing and refining processes and systems, and reallocation of staff resources) will also be explored.

1.2 The first stage review has identified the main discretionary areas where service reductions need to be considered. These are:-

- Strategic Housing
- Regeneration Projects and Economic Development Visitor Economy, events and festivals
- Communications and marketing
- Customer engagement

It has assessed what the implications would be of retreating from these areas of service provision.

1.3 **Tourism and Events:** This is a particularly complex service area in its own right for a number of reasons. Strategic engagement in the visitor economy by tourism marketing now sits with the Regeneration and Planning Service. The direct provision of organized events, and partnership working with others to provide, tourism related events, also now sits with the Regeneration and Planning Service.

Management of City Council owned venues which contribute to supporting the visitor economy sits largely with the Well being function in the Health and Housing Service, and there is also a close association with Museums, Happy Mount and Williamsons Parks

1.4 **Communications and Marketing:** This team services a range of Council activities which may be considered for reductions. There is potential to make related reductions in communications and marketing activity associated with reductions in other service areas and as a result of reprioritisation of activity and budgets in due course.

## **2.0 Proposal Details**

2.1 A review of how best to consider service reductions across all the areas highlighted above is taking place. This review takes place within the context of:

- The Council's corporate plan / priorities
- The Council's budget position

2.2 The review will take account of the views of relevant staff, trade unions and Elected Members and bring forward options that will-

- Generate ongoing savings
- Realistically withdraw to levels of service which are affordable
- Not continue to generate expectations that services can be provided
- Not divert pressures to other work areas to deliver a service which has been deleted or reduced.

2.3 The outline proposals for detailed review for the Regeneration and Planning service together with its new allocated former Community Engagement functions is as follows:-

- To review the options available to reduce engagement in Regeneration Projects and Economic Development, after assessing what the impact would be on the economic well being of the district and the ability of the Council to engage with the LEP.
- To consider whether to continue to engage in the strategic management of the visitor economy.
- To consider whether the Council can afford to provide a level of commissioned services to support the visitor economy.
- To consider whether to retreat from the direct provision of events
- To consider whether to reduce provision of the districts Visitor Information Centres or provide any visitor support facilities
- To review the disposition of venues run and managed by the City Council which contribute to the visitor economy, and consider whether to retreat from any or all such venues.
- To review the level of Communications and Marketing activity that will be needed, especially if a range of discretionary services provided across the Councils operations are withdrawn.

### 3.0 Details of Consultation

3.1 No formal consultation has taken place at this stage. Full consultation will be required with staff, trade unions, the Chambers of Trade and Commerce and other bodies with a direct interest in the discretionary services currently provided by the Council.

### 4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

	<b>Option 1:</b> To undertake no review of services	<b>Option 2:</b> To find efficiency savings only	<b>Option 3:</b> To undertake a review which could highlight the need for service reduction
Advantages	None. The Council's budget position is real and there is no	None. The extent of the forthcoming budget reduction	This gives the Council the opportunity to

	alternative but to undertake reviews.	cannot be mitigated by simply making efficiency savings.	prepare for 2015/16 well in advance. To manage the removal of services in a planned approach and to give affected staff greater time to make alternative employment arrangements.
Disadvantages	By not commencing any reviews now the Council would have to take urgent corrective action later as a budget crisis developed.	Such a limited review would address only the 2014/15 challenge and give insufficient time to prepare for the larger challenge the following year.	The community will have to prepare realistically for a reduction in services which the Council can no longer provide.
Risks	The Council may risk failing to set a balanced budget at some point in the medium term, leading to crisis management, massive service disruption and related repercussions.	The Council may risk failing to set a balanced budget at some point in the medium term, leading to crisis management, massive service disruption and related repercussions.	If the reviews maintain expectations that some services will continue to operate, with less resources, it may be over stretched

## 5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

5.1 Option 3 is preferred. The Council must plan realistically. Many years of budget reduction and efficiency savings have removed options for simple efficiencies.

## 6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The Council needs to act decisively at this very difficult time to maintain its ability to function across a wide set of statutory functions. Regretfully this now means that it has to accept that it may no longer be able to engage in discretionary activities, a number of which could, and ought to be provided by the private sector

### RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

Managing the Councils resources is a key supporting theme in the Corporate Plan. Where Service reduction takes place there will be a need to adjust the Corporate Plan accordingly.

### CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, HR, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

There will inevitably be a wide range of impacts across a spectrum of areas. Review will seek to be risk managed to avoid safety and legal impacts in particular.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The need to have clear regard to contractual and employment rights arising from reviews will be essential.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The areas to be considered in this review will largely relate to the revenue budget although there may be subsequent impacts on the capital budget. Savings to be investigated will also relate to grants and subsidies provided to other bodies for the provision of services and activities in the district and as such may consequently affect the viability of other organisations.

**OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS****Human Resources:**

The review will inevitably impact on the establishment within the service and potentially from support service areas.

**Information Services:**

The review could reduce the need for support in this area.

**Property:**

The review could lead to a reduced need for property assets

**Open Spaces:**

No likely impacts

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

none

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