



# **ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

## ***Panel Report***

**Public**

**Date of Meeting:** 28th February 2013

**Title:** ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE -  
TRANSFORMATION SAVINGS

**Report of:** Jane Meek, Director of Economic Development

**Report reference:** ED 08/13

### **Summary:**

To update the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the outcomes of the consultation into the Transformation proposals for the Economic Development Directorate and the implementation.

**Questions for / input required from Scrutiny:**

**Recommendations:**

**Contact Officer:** Jane Meek

**Ext:** 7190

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

## **Background**

As part of the Medium Term Finance Plan (MTFP) the Executive agreed the savings target for 2013/14. In the current MTFP the £1.819 million savings required is equally spread over the next 3 years. However the Executive requested Senior Management Team in liaison with Portfolio Holders to come up with proposals to front load the savings in delivering a majority of the savings required by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

With regards Economic Development the Directorate had a target of £150,000 savings to find. However, in view of the administrations priority to support economic growth the Director of Economic Development has worked closely with the Portfolio Holder to ensure that any re-structure will continue to address these issues.

In addition the transformation proposals have taken into account a number of key issues and influences which are taking place at a National and Local level. In particular the changes to the planning system, the introduction of the NPPF and the need to have an up to date Local Plan in order to deliver growth and address Localism.

## **Consultation**

Phase 1 of the consultation has now been completed and the proposed structure has been revised in response to this (see Appendix 1). In summary the consultation raised the following issues:-

- The effect on the production of the Local Plan through the reduction in Policy Planners
- Effect of the loss of the Principal Planner (Development Management) on the reputation and ability to deliver the service
- Effect of the loss of an Enforcement Officer which is a key issue for Members
- Loss of a Technician and cover during the holidays
- Neighbourhood Development Officer – title should be Rural Development Officer
- Admin/Service Support – proposal that this should be split up into the teams
- Planning, Economic Development and Property should be linked
- Statutory v non statutory – more support should be given to statutory services

## **Proposed New Structure**

In response to the issues raised it was proposed that the Policy and Economic Regeneration teams should be merged. This will provide support for the Local Plan and ensure that the policies reflect the economic needs of the community. In addition a new team will be established responsible for Strategic Property again providing that essential link between planning, economy and property. Development Management will remain a separate team and we will continue to review the processes through Lean Systems to help improve our customer service.

In detail the following posts will be deleted/created (see attached structures):-

Delete	Planning Manager
Delete	Economic Development Manager
Delete	Building Control Tech
Delete	Building Control Tech
Delete	Assistant Enforcement Officer
Delete	Principal Planner (Dev)
Delete	Planning Technician (Policy)
Delete	Planning Technician (Dev)
Delete	Rural Support Officer (P/T)
Delete	Student Placement
Create	Investment and Policy Manager
Create	Development Manager
Create	Regeneration Projects Officer
Create	Planning Technician
Create	Rural Development Officer (P/T)
Create	Strategic Property Manager

## **Implementation**

A detailed timetable has been developed (Appendix 2) and is currently being implemented.

**Impact assessments**

**Does the change have an impact on the following?**

Equality Impact Screening	Impact Yes/No?	Is the impact positive or negative?
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age		
Disability		
Race		
Gender/ Transgender		
Sexual Orientation		
Religion or belief		
Human Rights		
Health inequalities		
Rurality		

**If you consider there is either no impact or no negative impact, please give reasons:**

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**If an equality Impact is necessary, please contact the P&P team.**

## SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK TO CONSULTATION AND MY RESPONSES

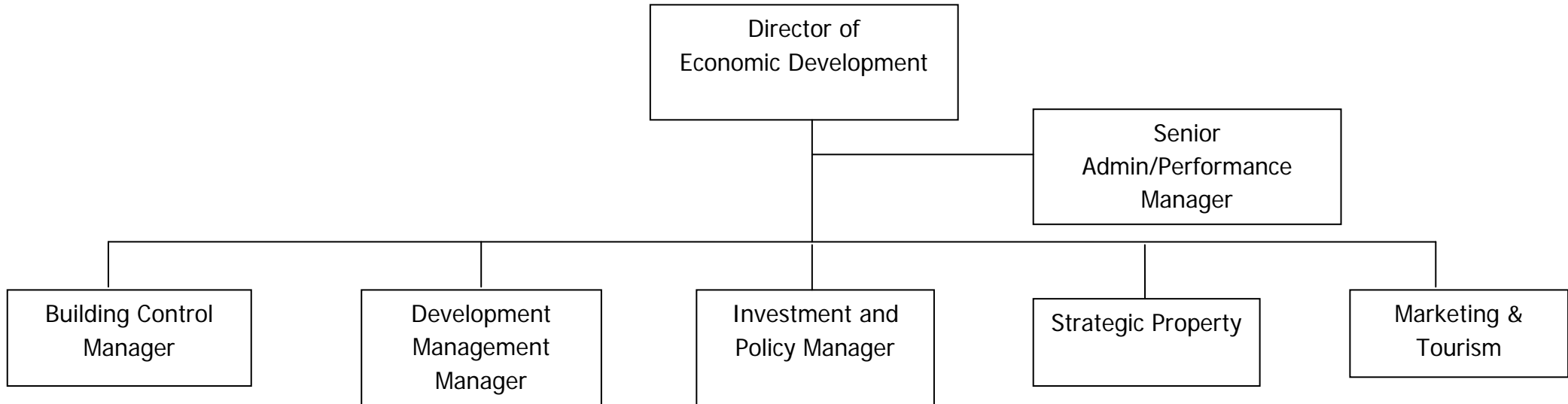
Some general comments: My thanks to those of you who took the time and effort to provide feedback. Where possible, I have incorporated your suggestions. Some of you helpfully provided supporting evidence from other councils in relation to workload and alternative suggestions. Inevitably, some of the counter proposals were contradictory, but that is not any cause for concern – merely that there is more than one way of doing things.

Below is a summary of the main points made and my response to them. I have tried to keep it as anonymous as possible and some of you may feel that the matter has been oversimplified but I can assure you that I have read and considered all feedback.

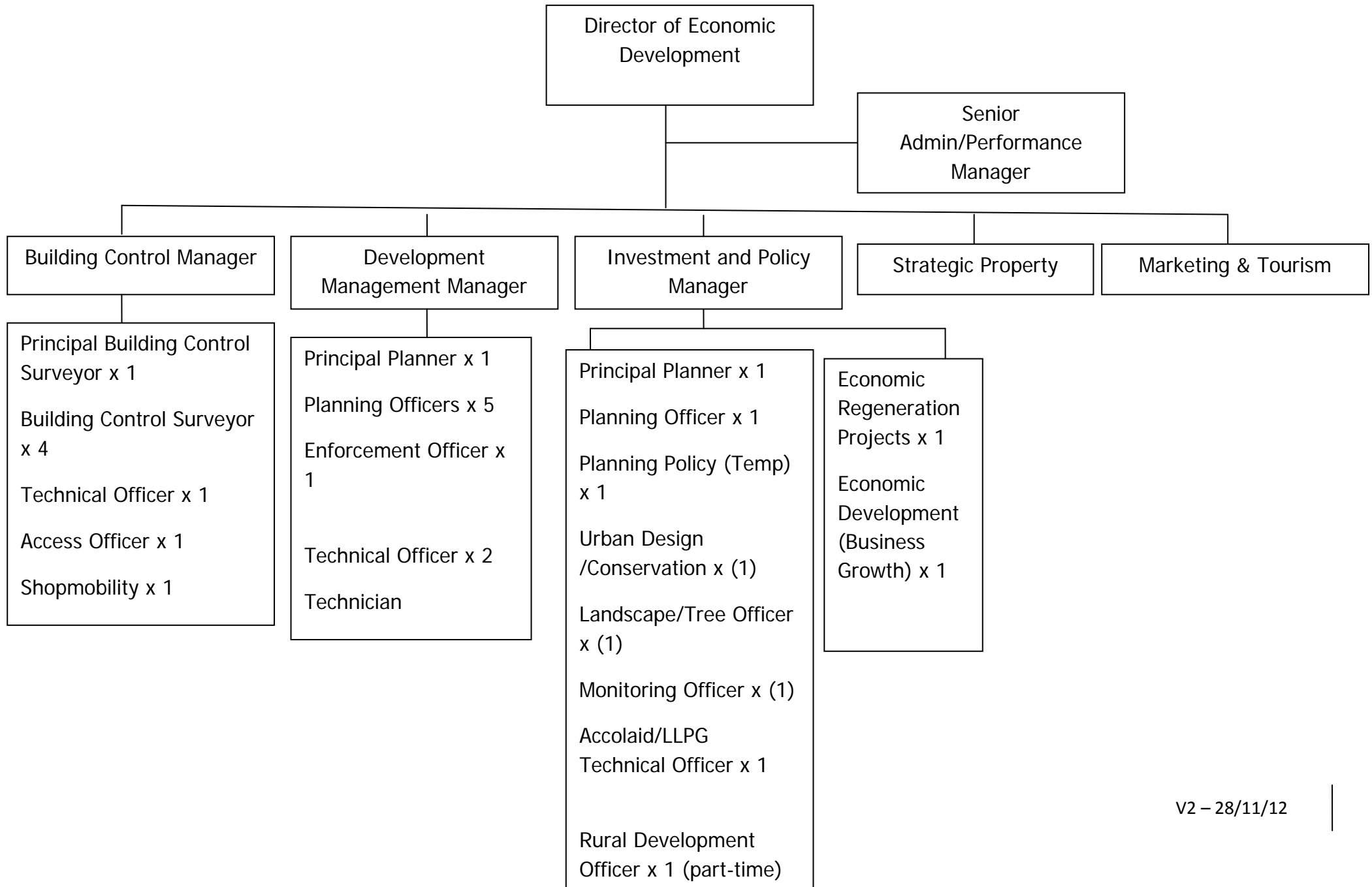
Concern	Response
A general concern for workload on remaining staff as it is currently high and some people work at weekends; some suggestion for making it easier to cope such as regulated times when phones are answered by officers (as opposed to messages left on answer phones or with admin team), more home working etc.	<i>This is a very real and genuine concern and one which we need to work though within the directorate to address. I welcome the suggestions made and believe it is something we need to take forward within individual teams in the new structure.</i>
General concern that the structure did not encourage more integrated working such as between economic development/regeneration and planning.	<i>This has been addressed by my second set of proposals to create a post of Investment and Policy Manager.</i>
Reduction in some technical support roles will increase (the already heavy) workload of other officers resulting in ,for example, insufficient resource to carryout work required that supports Marketing/Tourism/events, delays in enforcement and getting information to the public (which could have serous consequences for the Council).	<i>I appreciate the importance of all technical support work carried out in the Directorate; there will need to be more focus on priorities and greater integrated working across the directorate. Equally, the work done for corporate events need to be brought into the early planning stage. I do not say it will be easy but the budget challenges the Council are faced with are extremely challenging.</i>  <i>The point about experienced officers need to have the time to develop less experienced officers was also made and I agree that this is vital to increase our</i>

	<p><i>capacity within existing resources.</i></p> <p><i>Systems reviews should also address some of the capacity issues as we find more streamlined ways of dealing with processes. Feedback has included some and I believe it is valuable to consider these more fully.</i></p>
<p>Deletion of Planning Manager role proposed in first phase of consultation will result in additional pressure on those in development management and those responsible for the Local Plan to the extent that they is likely to be delays and slippage causing further delays and expense. Alternative structures have been suggested to enable better integration.</p>	<p><i>I have recognised this and welcome the alternative proposals. They have varied but are equally valid. I have decided that the most effective way will be to integrate planning policy with regeneration activities and put this forward as part of the second phase of consultation.</i></p>
<p>Reconsider the need for a separate admin team with manager is required and whether this admin would be better carried out within individuals teams.</p>	<p><i>Idea considered but I believe that the separate admin team plus a manager responsible for co-ordinating directorate wide issues is the most cost-effective.</i></p>
<p>City Council's assets should play a more significant role in work of regeneration and closer links with Property Services.</p>	<p><i>This has been recognised and addressed as far as is possible at this stage by the amendments to my original proposals.</i></p>
<p>Support for the principle of establishing a post of Regeneration Projects Officer and for refocusing the role of Economic Development Officer to that of business growth and suggests further development of this including a system that supports existing businesses as well as attracting new ones.</p>	<p><i>Noted.</i></p>
<p>Further consideration of marketing and tourism function and role/support for City Centre Management required.</p>	<p><i>I am aware of this and appreciate the suggestions made in the feedback and further consideration will be given to them in the future.</i></p>

<p>Support for post title change of Heritage Officer to reflect the wider skills set required by the function and the work carried out. Suggestions on how this could be enhanced further.</p>	<p><i>Noted.</i></p>
<p>Concern that cuts fall disproportionately on a small part of the directorate and that non statutory services should be considered first.</p>	<p><i>It is important to support the statutory services, however there are other service areas which are important to residents. The proposed structure with it's balance between developmental and statutory work reflects the politicians wishes and to enable this is a vital part of senior management roles.</i></p>
<p>Recently there has been an increase in residential planning applications, generating more income. This should be used to retain posts within planning even if only temporarily.</p>	<p><i>The managers concerned will "keep an eye" on levels of income generating work and there can be temporary additions to staffing if there is a business case to support it. The transformation consultation is about core on-going structure. I appreciate that to get temporary planning specialists quickly, on a short term casual or temporary basis is not always easy, however that is the most effective way to deal with fluctuating workload.</i></p>
<p>Suggested a number of areas that policy planning needs to address and concern that there are insufficient staff to do this.</p>	<p><i>This feedback is useful and practical. I have partly addressed it in my second set of proposals to create an Investment and Policy Manager. Once that person is in post they will need to work with the team to determine the priority and how to address them.</i></p>
<p>Post of Accolaid/LLPG Technical officer not on structure – was this an oversight</p>	<p><i>Thank you for highlighting this – now addressed in phase two of consultation. It was never intended to be removed and I apologise for any concern caused.</i></p>
<p>Concern over the job title of what was originally Rural Support Officer".</p>	<p><i>Job title of this post is now Rural Development Officer as it is more reflected of what the Council is trying to achieve.</i></p>







## Economic Development RESTRUCTURE TIMETABLE November 2012

Activity	w/c 12 <sup>th</sup> Nov	w/c 19 <sup>th</sup> Nov	w/c 26 <sup>th</sup> Nov	w/c 3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec	w/c 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec	w/c 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec	w/c 24 <sup>th</sup> Dec	w/c 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec	w/c 7 <sup>th</sup> Jan	w/c 14 <sup>th</sup> Jan	w/c 21 <sup>st</sup> Jan	w/c 28 <sup>th</sup> Jan	w/c 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb	w/c 11 <sup>th</sup> Feb	w/c 18 <sup>th</sup> Feb	w/c 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb	w/c 4 <sup>th</sup> Mar	w/c 11 <sup>th</sup> Mar		Assigned to
1 <sup>st</sup> phase consultation finishes																				
Potential termination costs																				JC
Costs of new structure																				JM
Estimated grades for new/changed jobs																				GMc
Consider feedback from 1 <sup>st</sup> phase and make amendments																				JM
Job descriptions																				JM/CH comments
Person specs																				JM/CH comments
Evaluate jobs																				GMc
2 <sup>nd</sup> phase consultation PREP																				JM/CH/JC
Meeting to feedback responses to staff																				JM
Firm application for VR																				JM
Report to SMT for approval																				JM
2 <sup>nd</sup> phase consultation finishes																				JM
Post consultation letter PREP giving final assimilations																				JM/CH/JC
Post consultation letters OUT																				JM/CH comments
Assimilation appeals (if any)																				JC
Assimilation appeals IN																				JC
Appeals to be heard																				Darren Crossley
Recruit/appoint to posts																				JM and DC