

Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny

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Title: Corporate Core

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Service: Chief Executive's Office

Directorate: Strategic Services, Legal, Governance
and Commercial Services

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the proposals for the Corporate Core.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes this report.

3. Details

3.1 North Tyneside Council is evolving from an organisation that directly delivers services to one that has a greater focus on commissioning services and closer working relationships with partners from both the private and voluntary sectors. The most visible change will be from October 2012 when, subject to final Cabinet approval, the Council starts working with new partners on the Technical and Business packages.

3.2 The impact of this change will be that the strategic centre of the organisation will need to adapt, for two reasons

- to reflect the changing needs of the organisation
- to meet the financial constraints

3.3 The Corporate Core project, which is part of the Change, Efficiency and Improvement (CEI), has been focused on understanding those changing needs and how the strategic functions can best be delivered. For clarity, the functions that are included within the scope of the Corporate Core project are

- Democratic Support
- Finance
- Strategic HR
- Policy
- Performance
- Economic development
- Client role for the partnerships
- Legal services
- Scrutiny
- VCS Engagement
- Engagement
- Communications
- Community Safety

Structure of the Corporate Core

3.4 The Corporate Core refers to the strategic functions that the Council will need in the future. It is important to note that other CEI projects also cover functions that are within the scope of the Corporate Core, for example Finance and Strategic HR are covered by the Business package.

3.5 The following functions will be required to deliver savings of £800,000 over three years including £338,000 in this financial year:

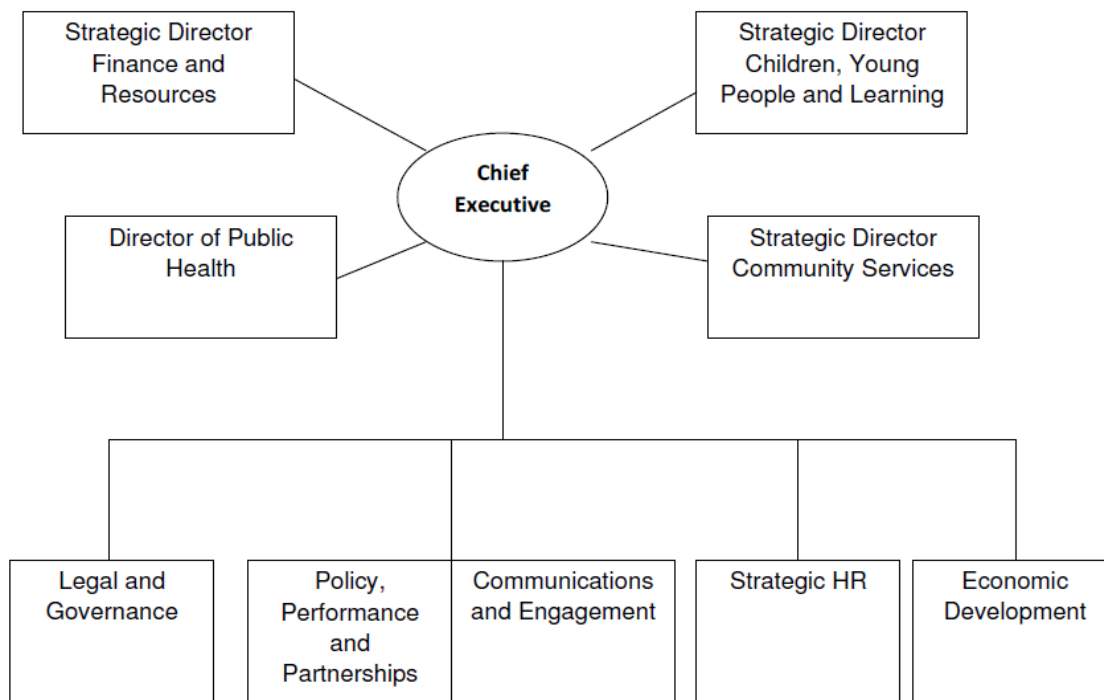
- Legal services
- Democratic Support
- Scrutiny
- VCS Engagement
- Engagement
- Communications
- Policy
- Performance

3.6 Our approach is to find smarter ways of working by:

1. Bringing together a number of smaller teams in order to increase resilience and capacity;
2. aligning staff teams who are doing complimentary work
3. removing duplication of effort where it exists;

3.7 This will also provide staff with an opportunity to learn new skills by working over a larger range of functions.

3.8 Consequently, at a high level, the Corporate Core will be structured in the following way



How the Corporate Core will operate

3.9 The corporate core will operate in two ways, structured across a range of teams

- **Core Democratic and Governance functions** such as those that support the democratic process and the overall corporate governance of the Council
- **Strategic ‘centres of excellence’** which will provide a professional lead for the organisation. This will include setting standards, agreeing strategic direction and co-ordination but then supporting delivery, which will continue to take place with the Directorates. This will allow good practice and experience to be shared between the centres of excellence and the operational staff within the services.

3.10 The Corporate Core functions can be split in the following way

Type	Functions	
a) Core Democratic and Governance functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic Support • Finance (part) • HR Strategy (part) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal (part) • Scrutiny
b) Strategic ‘Centres of Excellence’ functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy • Performance • HR Strategy (part) • VCS Engagement • Legal (part) • Economic development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Communications • Community Safety • Finance (part) • Client role for the Partnerships • Office of the Elected Mayor

Rationale

3.11 It is proposed that we deliver the improvement and efficiency objectives in three ways:

1. Increased income - £75k – through an increase in land charge income, the registry service and the management fee to Kier based on their turnover
2. Reduced Costs - £82k – through a reduction in services and supplies budgets, a reduction in election training budgets and a greater emphasis on internally sourced professional advice;
3. Staff changes – £179K – a reduction of 6.3 full time equivalent posts, two of which have already been deleted, and one of which is vacant.

Implementation

3.12 Detailed proposals have been developed and are now being consulted on with staff and the Trade Unions (attached as appendix A).

3.13 The consultation is due to end on 18 July. The Corporate Core proposals will be reported to a special meeting of Cabinet at the end of July or early August alongside the report on the evaluation and proposed selection of partners for the Technical and Business packages.

3.14 Implementation will commence shortly after so that the Corporate Core is in place for when the Business and Technical packages go live in October 2012.

4. Appendices

4.1 Proposals on developing the Corporate Core for North Tyneside Council