

City Of Westminster

Cabinet URGENCY COMMITTEE	Date 3 rd February 2003	Title of Report Reorganisation of the Environment & Leisure Department – Former Education Functions.
Classification : For General Release		Report of : Chief Executive Director of Environment & Leisure Acting Director of Education
Wards Involved	All Wards	
Policy Context	Supporting the development of effective management and service delivery in the City Council.	
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1. Summary

- 1.1 The Annual Council meeting on 15th May 2002 was informed of the revised portfolios for Cabinet Members notified by the Leader and established Overview & Scrutiny Committees with terms of reference to reflect these. Officer responsibilities and departmental structures are being reorganised to reflect these changed portfolios
- 1.2 A subsequent report to the Urgency Sub Committee has detailed proposals for a new management structure in respect of the transfer of Highways Maintenance, Street Lighting, Highways Licensing and Corporate Property functions to the Environment & Leisure Department. These proposals are designed to allow closer alignment of departmental responsibilities with the changed Cabinet portfolios
- 1.3 The recent resignation of the Director of Education has provided a further opportunity to consider management portfolios across the City Council and determine the best arrangements for the future delivery of City wide services. A transfer of the Libraries, Archives and Arts functions, along with the Assistant Director (Lifelong Learning) to the Environment and Leisure Department will have a number of benefits. These include:
 - opportunity to develop a distinct and more coherent identity for these important services as a consequence of being less obscured by the

sheer scale and priority of the schools agenda.

- a clearer focus for the work of the new Director of Education
- more opportunities and a clearer focus for cross-departmental working between Education, Social and Community Services and Environment and Leisure.
- bringing together in one department most of the Council's functions which are within the remit of the Department for Culture Media and Sport.

- 1.4 It is proposed that the transfer of these functions will take effect from 1 February 2003. The detailed proposals for officer structures that are required to complete the planned transfer will be reported to individual Cabinet Members in due course.
- 1.5 The opportunity is also taken to consider the transfer of the Westminster Sports Unit and the Sayers Croft Field Studies Centre to the Environment and Leisure Department, and to outline the pros and cons of such a transfer.

2. Proposed Decisions

- 2.1 That in the light of the considerations set out in Section 5, the Westminster Sports Unit remain in the Education Department and the Sayers Croft Field Study Centre be transferred to the Environment & Leisure Department with effect from 1 February 2003.
- 2.2 That the post of Duke of Edinburgh Award Officer transfer from the Westminster Sport Unit to the Youth Service with effect from 1st February 2003.
- 2.3 That the proposed changes in departmental responsibilities set out in this report be approved and adopted with effect from 1 February 2003.
- 2.4 That subject to 2.1 above, the functions and posts identified in Appendix A be transferred to the Environment and Leisure Department with effect from 1 February.
- 2.5 That the senior management structure for Environment and Leisure set out in Appendix B be deleted and replaced with the management structure set out in Appendix C.
- 2.6 That revisions to the schedules of functions delegated to the Director of Environment and Leisure and the Director of Education be dealt with in a separate report to follow.

3. Background

- 3.1 The revised portfolios for Cabinet Member and terms of reference for Overview and Scrutiny Committees were reported to the Annual Council meeting. Officer responsibilities and departmental structures are being reorganised to reflect these changed portfolios and take the opportunity to implement the best arrangements for the future delivery of services.

- 3.2 There is a strong emphasis on corporate and cross-departmental working throughout the Council. This achieves a more comprehensive and innovative pattern of service delivery and development in keeping with the complex needs of residents and other users of Council services, and is one of the fundamental principles behind the Customer Services Initiative. The departmental locations of services should not act as a barrier to innovation or cross-service working. However, it is necessary from time to time to review the balance of functions within departments and ensure that they are in line with overall Council priorities and that key services are given proper recognition and profile.
- 3.3 In recent months, given the introduction of the CSi and the relet of the waste collection and street cleaning contract, the Environment and Leisure Department has examined the extent to which its organisation, structure and procedures are appropriate in meeting corporate priorities, addressing customer needs and managing service development.
- 3.4 The recent resignation of the Director of Education has provided an opportunity to further consider management portfolios.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 After a review of current structures and consideration of the focus and priorities for a new Director of Education it is proposed to transfer the Libraries, Archives, Arts, and Corporate Voluntary Sector Grants functions to the Environment and Leisure Department, along with the Assistant Director (Lifelong Learning) and the associated support functions. This will have a number of benefits including:

- **A distinct and more coherent identity for these important services as a consequence of being less obscured by the scale and priority of the schools agenda.**

The delivery and achievements of this important group of services with regard to quality of life is substantial. There are considerable opportunities for further development and delivery of the Council's Civic Renewal and other priorities, and a new departmental perspective will enhance the ability to realise these.

- **A clearer focus for the work of the new Director of Education**
There is a substantial and complex national and local agenda for school organisation, school improvement, and work with young people in Westminster. The new Director of Education will be able to give these activities their full attention without being diverted into different but equally complex agendas for a broader range of services.

- **More opportunities for cross-departmental working between Education, Social and Community Services and Environment and Leisure.**

In order to work across departments and thus open up innovative approaches to service development and delivery, all departments need to feel able to make a positive contribution. The group of services proposed

for transfer already works very closely together and with schools, adult education, the youth service, and parts of Housing and Social and Community Services. These links will need to be sustained and this will allow for new links to be forged between all three departments.

- **Bringing together in one department most of the Council's functions which are within the remit of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).**

The co-location of DCMS services within one department assists in creating a more coherent identity for the services and also facilitates strategic working with and influencing of government. The GLA, regional agencies and others are developing and planning for these services as a group and if Westminster's services are similarly grouped, this will enable us to maximise influence and opportunities.

- 4.2 The services that it is proposed to transfer are all improving services that contribute in a variety of ways to the quality of life and development of people and local communities in the City. Libraries are a statutory service experiencing considerable growth in business and with clear roles in e-government, information, learning and reading. The government is expected to announce a new strategic framework for public libraries in January 2003. Arts and Sports have a major role in economic and social regeneration and there are many projects and activities being delivered at present which are enhancing the quality of life in all parts of the City. Within the new department Archives will play a key role providing an evidential focus reflecting on the past to inform consideration of current and future environmental issues, and support planning for Civic Renewal. Moving functional responsibility for these services to a new Department provides opportunities to consolidate work and to give new energy to service development.
- 4.3 There will also be benefits and opportunities for the existing services within Environment and Leisure. For example new approaches to promoting environmental awareness through the arts and libraries can be developed, improved targeting of services to promote inclusion
- 4.4 All of the services proposed for transfer have established strong links with schools, youth and adult learning services in relation to programme delivery, funding and development. Examples from Arts, Archives and Libraries illustrate this:
- The Arts team work with schools and the School Effectiveness team in supporting curriculum enrichment activities using the arts not just as a subject in their own right, but as a vehicle for addressing difficult issues, such as drugs, homelessness, relationships etc. The evaluation reports from schools demonstrate the value of this work and how it can engage young people into learning who would otherwise be disaffected.
 - The Archives team work with schools and the School Effectiveness team in supporting curriculum enrichment activities. The Archives are an established and richly resourced centre for the Education Inset training programme, embedding the study of historical sources in key focus areas

such as the literacy and citizenship strategies. The Archives Centre helps teachers bring study alive through a hands-on method of engaging with the national curriculum, allowing teachers to break free of the restrictions of the classroom.

- Libraries work closely with schools on study support activities and on the promotion of reading and literacy and will shortly be developed as Connexions Access Points to give support and information to young people. They also work with the Adult Education Service as part of the UKOnline programme, providing supported access to learning through computers located in libraries, links with family learning programmes, basic skills, and e-learning.

4.5 All these and other links have been greatly assisted by co-location within an Education department. It is therefore essential that the links with Education as a department and with individual units or services are sustained and developed in the new structures if the risks to programme delivery are to be avoided. As referred to earlier, cross-departmental working is part of the organisational culture of Westminster. By ensuring that the existing links within Education are sustained in the new structure, the cross-departmental working between Environment and Leisure and Education can be considerably strengthened through these proposals.

4.6 The Corporate Voluntary Sector Grants function is currently managed by the Assistant Director (Lifelong Learning). To ensure business continuity it will also transfer to the Environment and Leisure Department, but the Deputy Chief Executive will take on the corporate lead responsibility for working with the Voluntary sector, previously undertaken by the Director of Education. In the following 12 months the management arrangements for this function will be reviewed.

5. Considerations for the transfer of Westminster Sports Unit and Sayers Croft to the Environment & Leisure Department

5.1 It is suggested that there could be benefits in also transferring the Westminster Sports Unit and the Sayers Croft Field Studies Centre to the Environment and Leisure Department. The first would provide a greater integration of sports development work into the leisure and parks service, whilst the second would facilitate opportunities to integrate and diversify activities at the Centre around a broader environmental studies agenda and enable closer examination of external funding opportunities.

Westminster Sports Unit

- 5.2 There is a strong rationale for bringing the two Sports and Leisure teams together under one coherent management. The Leisure Contract with Cannons is moving from net subsidy to net income to the Council by 2004, the Westminster Sports Unit is run with a subsidy. The amalgamation of the two teams would build on the existing joint working and would use the Sports Strategy to unite the team in one clear and co-ordinated plan. The Sports Strategy is currently under review; it is intended that the aims and objectives will seek to deliver sports and leisure activities across the City and the range of customers/users of our services. The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme is primarily a Youth Achievement Award. The Awards Officer is currently managed from within the Sports Unit. It is proposed to transfer this post to the Youth Service, pending a wider review of the services to young people in the new Education Department.
- 5.3 The amalgamation of the Westminster Sports Unit with Leisure in one department would provide the clarity of a single point of contact within the Council for Sports and Leisure. This proposal would pool the vast experience across both teams, gain a higher profile for the combined range of activities, secure greater external funding and provide for a more strategic approach across the City. The new team would have more flexibility and a greater ability to develop partnerships with external bodies including the Royal Parks. In the longer term there could be property and management efficiencies created by the merged team.
- 5.4 Whilst there are potential benefits to be gained in putting the Westminster Sports Unit with Leisure facilities, there are some aspects of the Unit's work which need to be carefully considered. Much of the work of the Unit is focused on Youth and on schools. The work with schools is grant aided and targeted. This work is directly focused on developing the curriculum and enabling schools to meet the national standards. Ofsted reports on schools comment on PE and sport as part of the curriculum offer. Consequently teachers are employed by the unit and placed in schools. Professional support for these staff is provided through the School Effectiveness Group. An increasing aspect of the Unit's work is with Youth and there is a Civic Renewal target for the increase of minority sports. The links to services in the Education Department and to schools are essential to the success of Westminster Sports Unit and care must be taken not to change the core functions and priorities of the Unit.

Sayers Croft Field Studies Centre

- 5.5 This successful residential facility located in Surrey caters for elements of the National Curriculum that cannot be delivered in the City. The Centre offers specialist courses in Biology, Geography and Adventure for Key Stage 3 to 'A' level for schools in Westminster and other London and South East authorities. Primary and Infant schools also use the Centre as do youth and community groups during weekends and when schools are closed. Westminster schools benefit from a reduced rate, subsidised by external users. The Centre is open for 50 weeks a year and is fully booked.

- 5.6 The Centre has secured grant aid to expand the facilities to incorporate neighbouring woodland. The Centre has operated at arms-length from the Council but opportunities exist to integrate and diversify activities at the Centre. Responsibility for this centre could transfer to the Environment and Leisure Department.
- 5.7 The benefits of this proposal would include a closer working relationship with the City's Biodiversity Action Plan and the targets for raising the profile of species and habitat conservation and the positive aspects of greening the environment. The new structure would place the staff at Sayers Croft in close contact with the expertise of staff in the arboricultural and environmental fields. Nationally, field studies centres are diversifying both in terms of activities and the user groups attracted. This in turn provides a more sustainable revenue profile. Staff in the Environment & Leisure department have experience in attracting external funding and establishing structures that may assist in identifying external funding opportunities e.g. Environmental Taskforce under the New Deal Programme, EU funding ESF etc. The possibility of Trust Status may also be worth considering at some point in the future.
- 5.8 Sayers Croft is tied in very strongly to the National Curriculum and is a means by which Westminster City Council enables schools to fulfil their statutory duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. It also contributes to the social inclusion of children and young people through its residential nature and the range of physical and team building activities available. In maximising the opportunity to diversify, the City Council will need to reflect on whether the current core purpose of the Centre can be maintained and if not, how the City Council will make alternative arrangements.
- 5.9 Whilst it is located at a distance from the City there are close links with the School Effectiveness Group for professional support and links to schools. The Head of the Centre is also invited to headteacher meetings.
- 5.10 As with the Westminster Sports Unit, transfer of the service can have major developmental benefits, but there is a risk that successful and well regarded activities could be lost or diminished unless existing working relationships are maintained and developed.

6. Financial Implications.

- 6.1 Any costs associated from the revised management structure will be contained within existing departmental budgets. Possible management efficiencies and savings resulting from the merger of functions will be reported at the detailed structure stage.
- 6.2 Operational budgets associated with the services transferring are, for the most part, already separately identified within Performance Plans. Where budgets are shared, for example common support or policy, costs or resources will be apportioned accordingly. Details of these costs and /or resources will be reported in more detail in the subsequent report to the relevant Cabinet Member.

7. Performance Plan Implications.

- 7.1 Any performance plan implications arising from this report will be addressed in the business planning process.

8. Legal Implications.

- 8.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9. CSI Implications.

There are no CSI implications arising from this report. The detailed structures to follow will take account of the services which have or are due to transfer to the CSI.

10. Staffing Implications And Consultation

- 10.1 Staff and the Union have been consulted on the proposals in this report and comments received have been considered and where appropriate incorporated. Detailed proposals will be submitted for comments in due course as part of the continuing consultation process.

11. Ward Member Comments.

- 11.1 The services referred to in this report affect all wards, and no individual ward members have been consulted.

12. Reasons for Decisions.

- 12.1 A transfer of these functions to Environment and Leisure would provide an integrated approach to service delivery beyond the capacity of existing structures. The proposals contained in this report will deliver a more co-ordinated service for customers and an enhanced flexible team will be more able to adapt to the continuing financial stringency that the Council is likely to face over the forthcoming years.

More detailed changes in officer structures will be reported to individual Cabinet Members for approval.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Functions and Posts to be transferred

Appendix B: Existing Management Structure of Environment & Leisure Department

Appendix C: Proposed Management Structure of Environment & Leisure Department

<p>If you have any queries about this report please contact Joe Duckworth on 020 7641 3169 jduckworth@westminster.gov.uk</p>
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Cabinet - Reorganisation of the Planning & Licensing; Transportation & Infrastructure; Environment & Leisure Departments

FOR COMPLETION BY CHIEF OFFICER

Decision:

Signature:

Designation:

Date:

Time: