

REPORT TO CABINET 15TH JUNE 2005
REMODELLING COUNCIL SERVICES

1. **PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This report identifies certain requirements and opportunities for efficiency gains in remodelling the structure of the Council's Services and suggests approaches for the Cabinet to consider.

2. **BACKGROUND**

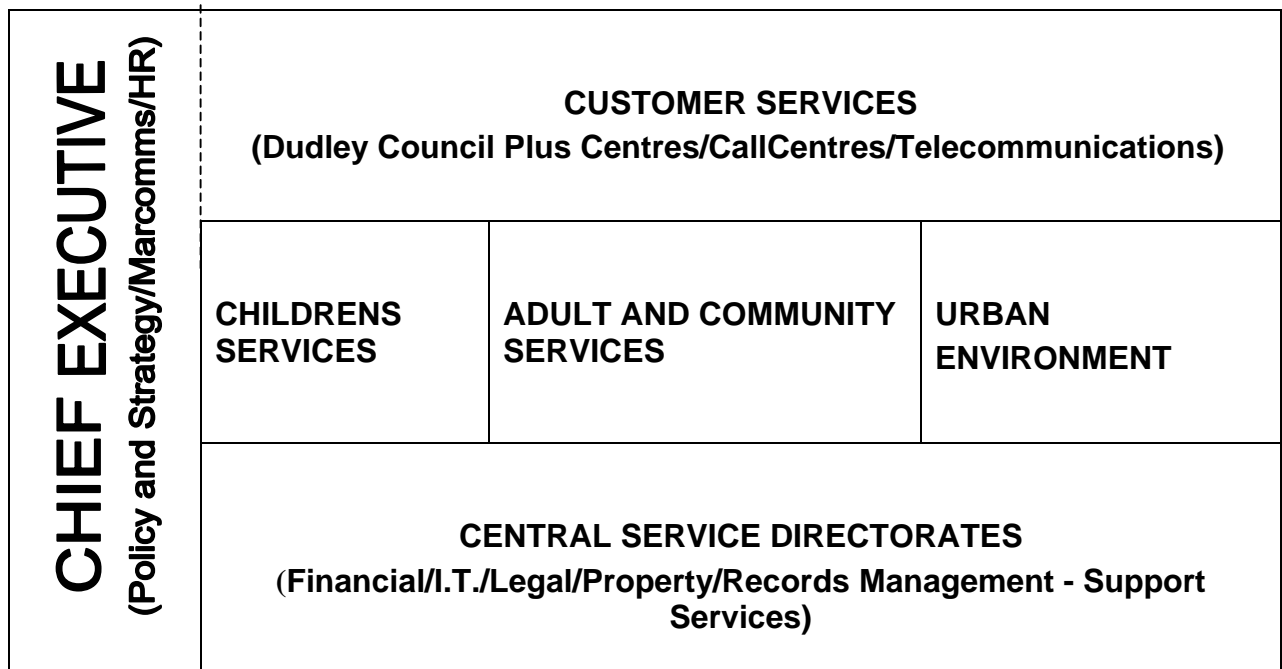
- 2.1 The Council has over the last 6 years been following an organic process of directorate merger in the interests of both economy and effectiveness, the last phase of which was the creation of the Urban Environment Directorate.
- 2.2 The Council is now faced by two new pressures for change, one externally imposed and the other following from the establishment of Customer Services (CATS).
- 2.3 The external pressure is the Government and key inspectorates' insistence on the creation of unified Children's Services Directorates and the parallel necessity of creating Adult Services Directorates.
- 2.4 The internal pressure is the need to realise the efficiency gains and budget transfers promised as a consequence of the handover of responsibility for citizen/customer interfaces from Directorates to the new Customer Services Team.

3. **POTENTIAL FOR REMODELLING STRUCTURES**

- 3.1 The Council needs to establish new Directorates for Children and Adults Services but can and should follow a process of consultation and detailed planning. Furthermore the timescale to which it should work should aim to avoid the potentially destabilising effect of structural changes prior to CPA inspection planned for late 2005/early 2006
- 3.2 A new Children's Services Directorate would effectively comprise the Children's Services elements of Social Services, educational services for young people up to the age of 18 from the Directorate of Education and Lifelong Learning and the Youth Offending Team
- 3.3 A new Adult and Community Services Directorate could comprise the Adults Services division of Social Services, Adult Education and Library Services, plus all the functions presently contained in the Housing Directorate.
- 3.4 The Council has the opportunity to enhance the economy and effectiveness of its operations by further changes outlined below

- (a) The continuing transfer of customer service activity (and the associated budgets) from Directorates into the new Customer Services Team.
- (b) The establishment of a new unified central personnel support team serving all directorates.
- (c) The creation of a Council-wide documents and records management team.

3.5 The remodelled Council structure could be as shown in the diagram below:



3.6 There would need to be consequential revisions of Cabinet Member portfolios and to the terms of reference of Select Committees. In particular the Council would need to establish a Children’s portfolio, an Adult and Community Services portfolio but could retain a separate Housing portfolio if desired.

4. PROCESS AND TIMESCALE ISSUES

4.1 To progress the remodelling suggested in this report requires substantial detailed preparatory work (including consultation with Unions and affected staff).

4.2 The inspectorates concerned (CSCI and Ofsted) endorse the concept of early appointment by the Council of a Director of Children’s Services and a Director of Adult Services. These appointees would take responsibility for the strategic planning for the two new Directorates.

- 4.3 The suggested timescale would be the completion of preparations by 1st July 2006 and finalisation of the new Directorate structure immediately thereafter.

5. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The personnel implications of this report are the subject of a separate Part B report on the Agenda of this Cabinet meeting

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 At this stage it is believed that the creation of the new Directorates can be broadly cost neutral apart from the initial costs of any redundancies or early retirements which are individually sanctioned by the Cabinet as a consequence of the proposed changes.
- 6.2 As part of the process of mapping activity, the new Directors will identify any resources necessary to complete the restructure and if possible efficiency savings and gains to offset them. It may be necessary to incur additional expenditure as part of the mapping/preparatory phase, and wherever possible this will be met from existing budget and earmarked reserves. This will be the subject of a further cabinet report in due course.

7. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

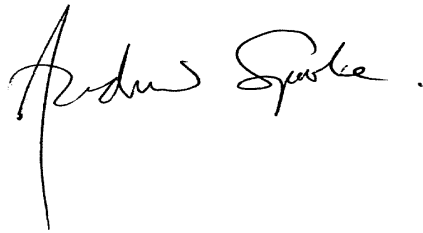
- 7.1 The requirement to appoint a Director of Children's Services and to appoint a Cabinet Member for Children's Services is contained in Sections 18 and 19 of the Children Act 2004.
- 7.2 Section 112 of the Local Government Act, 1972, requires the Council to appoint such officers as it considers necessary, and on such reasonable terms as it thinks fit, to enable its various statutory functions to be discharged.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 That the Cabinet recommends to Council the following changes:
- (a) The creation of a Children's Services Directorate, and an Adult and Community and Housing Services Directorate with effect from 1st July 2006 subject to the necessary consultation with staff and trade unions.
 - (b) The establishment of a personnel support service serving all Directorates.

- (c) The creation of new portfolios for Cabinet Members in 2006/7 to include Children's Services and Adult and Community Services whilst retaining the portfolio of Housing Services.
- (d) The revision of the responsibilities of Select Committees so as to ensure that a single Select Committee has responsibility for Children's Services and a single Select Committee has responsibility for Adult Services.

8.2 That the Cabinet receives a further report in due course detailing the financial and all other implications of establishing the new Directorates.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Sparke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long vertical line extending downwards from the end.

**Report prepared:
by Andrew Sparke, Chief Executive
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