



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Business Support Review - Finance & Resources Department
Date:	18 February 2011
Reporting Officer:	Julie Thompson, Director of Finances & Resources

Relevant Background Information

The SP&R Committee gave approval on 22 October 2010 to secure a proportion of the 2010/11 under spend to fund potential voluntary redundancies (VR) this financial year.

It was agreed that specific proposals in relation to potential voluntary redundancies in targeted areas such as Finance & Resources, Parks & Leisure Services and Facilities Management would be developed with a view to bringing these back to standing committees / Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval.

Permission to release 2 people on VR in the Finance and Resources Department was given at Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 21 January 2011.

Key Issues

The voluntary redundancies identified within the Finance and Resources Department were two Secretarial Assistant posts. The deletion of these two posts was identified during the review of Finance and Resources Business Support, the aim of which was to improve effectiveness and ensure a more flexible business support service throughout the department.

The outcome of the review of the business support function, including the changes under VR, is as follows:

Current staffing establishment:

No.	Job title	Grade	Located in
1	Programme & Business Support Officer	PO3	ISB
1	Business Support Officer	PO3	Directorate
1	Business Support Officer	PO1	Former BIS
2	Programme & Business Support Assistant	SO1	ISB
2	Secretarial Assistant	Scale 6	1x HR 1xDirectorate
1	Business Support Assistant	Scale 6	1x HR
3	Business Support Assistant	Scale 5	1XFormer BIS 1xDirectorate 1 x ARGS
15	Business Support Clerk	Scale 3	Across all functions
2	Receptionist/Telephonist	Scale 3	ISB

Total of 28 posts

Proposed staffing establishment:

No.	Job title	Grade	Proposed location
2	Business Coordinators	PO3	Directorate
4	Senior Business Support Assistant	SO2	2xISB 1xHR 1x Finance & Performance
3	Business Support Assistants	Scale 5	3xFinance & Performance
14	Business Support Clerk	Scale 3	Directorate with allocation to functions
2	Receptionist/Telephonist	Scale 3	ISB

Total of 25 posts

In summary the overall effect of this means two voluntary redundancies (as previously agreed by committee) and one Business Support Clerk will move back to the basic grade pool to be redeployed elsewhere.

Management wishes to implement the above changes in order to provide greater flexibility; better alignment of resources across the department; and better planning and coordination.

A significant consultation exercise has taken place with the trade unions and staff members between October 2010 and January 2011. While management considers much progress to have been made in moving towards the trade union side position and with the individual employees concerned, the trade unions have advised they do not endorse the management proposal.

The proposals set out above however present a clear business case for the voluntary redundancy of two secretarial posts and an alignment of remaining resources across the department. There is no compulsory redundancy nor financial detriment to any member of staff.

Resource Implications**Financial (as reported to Committee on 21 January 2011)**

The one off cost to the council to release the two Secretarial Assistants on voluntary redundancy is £89,000

This will result in year on year savings of £59,590

The payback period is 1.49 years

Human Resources

Consultation will continue with all relevant stakeholders, including Trade Unions and staff to develop an implementation plan which is fully in accordance with all HR policies and procedures. The changes will be implemented fully in accordance with the councils HR policies and procedures.

Recommendations

Members are asked to agree to the Director of Finance and Resources implementing the changes outlined above, in accordance with normal Human Resource policies and procedures that include job description agreement, job evaluation and the Council's Categorisation process.

Decision Tracking

Responsible Officer – Director of Finance & Resources

Key to Abbreviations

VR – Voluntary Redundancy
