

South Ayrshire Council

Report by Head of Legal and Democratic Services to Leadership Panel of 16 February 2016

Subject: Service Review of Democratic Support

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the proposals arising from the service review of the Democratic Support service for approval.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Panel:

2.1.1 considers the findings and proposals of the Democratic Support service review including the comments arising from the Service and Performance Panel's scrutiny undertaken at its meeting on 26 January 2016;

2.1.2 agrees the findings and the following proposals:

- (i) that further work be undertaken by officers and Elected Members to consider the support required by Elected Members, including the Provost, in preparation for a new administration in 2017, and to consider changes in working practices accordingly;
- (ii) that further work be undertaken by officers under operational delegated authority to consider the physical layout of reception in County Buildings and the possibility that the print room and the mail room be moved closer to reception, as part of the Office Accommodation project – upgrade works to County Buildings;
- (iii) subject to alternative arrangements being made for those who currently make use of County Buildings in the evenings, that the standard opening hours of County Buildings be shortened as determined by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation;
- (iv) that the entire civic budget be delegated to officers (subject to final approval by full Council); and
- (v) that new guidelines for civic recognition be developed and implemented by the Executive Director –Resources Governance and Organisation in line with the principles set out at paragraph 3.10.4 (iii) of the report presented to the Service and Performance Panel as set out in Appendix 1; and

2.1.3 notes the changes to the structure within the Committee Services team that have been approved by the Chief Executive under her delegated powers, as set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

3. Background

- 3.1 A summary of the report submitted to the Service and Performance Panel of 26 January 2016) is provided in Appendix 1, and a summary of the discussion at this Panel is contained in the extract draft minute (attached as Appendix 3).
- 3.2 The Panel should note that while the scope of the service review did not include the achievement of any previously agreed savings, the service review team considered how to achieve these. The proposals reflect the findings that:
- (i) changes to working practices across the teams that support the print room, the mail room, reception and the security and management of County Buildings are likely to require changes to the layout of reception and the location of the mail room and print room; and
 - (ii) changes to working practices regarding the support that is provided to Elected Members, including the Provost, require consultation with Elected Members.
- 3.3 In relation to the changes to County Buildings reception referred to at paragraph 3.2 (i) above, the Service and Performance Panel requested that this report to the Leadership Panel should expand on the likely savings that might arise from the cost of these works, and this is dealt with at paragraph 3.6.1 below.
- 3.4 In relation to the changes referred to at paragraph 3.2 (ii) above, the Service and Performance Panel recommended that recommendation 2.1.2 (i) should make clear that Elected Members must be involved in the further work that is required. Recommendation 2(a) has been amended accordingly. It is anticipated that the Council will convene such a working group prior to the 2016 summer recess, to consider wider issues in anticipation of the change of administration in 2017, and so it is proposed that this working group should also consider the changes referred to at paragraph 3.2 (ii) above. The Service and Performance Panel also requested that this report to the Leadership Panel should expand on the requirement for the Council to operate a civic car, and the costs of doing so. This is dealt with at paragraph 3.6.2 below.
- 3.5 The review findings and recommendations were scrutinised by the Service and Performance Panel on 26 January 2016, and Members agreed that the findings and recommendations, as detailed in the report, be presented to the Leadership Panel with the following clarifications and additional information:
- (i) that proposal 2.1.2 (i) be amended to include reference to Elected Members (which it has been for the purposes of this report);
 - (ii) further explanation regarding the revenue savings that might arise from proposal 2.1.2 (ii) regarding the layout of reception; and
 - (iii) an assessment of the requirement for the Council to have a civic car.
- 3.6 ***Considerations arising from comments from the scrutiny carried out by the Service and Performance Panel***
- 3.6.1 The Service and Performance Panel requested that an assessment be brought to the Leadership Panel regarding the revenue savings that might arise from recommendation 2.1.2 (ii). The following points should be noted by the Leadership Panel:
- (i) The works that could be undertaken at reception and surrounding rooms would be funded from capital. It is proposed that these works are considered as part of the Office Rationalisation project – upgrade works to County Buildings. That being the case, the works would be unlikely to be

undertaken before 2017/18.

- (ii) These works are also likely to be recommended as part of an ongoing review of the security of County Buildings, and the use that is made of the courtyard, particularly in terms of vehicular access.
- (iii) If the print room and mail room can be relocated to be closer to reception, this will assist in the efficient delivery of services by the small teams of staff who cover those functions and assist in the security and management of County Buildings.
- (iv) If these changes allowed the Council to reduce its staff costs, those staff cost savings would, over a number of years, cover the capital cost of the changes to reception and then show a recurring annual saving.
- (v) The changes that might be possible will be informed by various strands of improvement work that are currently underway, including in relation to the printing and postage requirements of the Council.

3.6.2 The Service and Performance Panel also requested that this report to the Leadership Panel should expand on the requirement for the Council to operate a civic car, and the costs of doing so. The civic car is used to chauffeur the Provost to events and is the principal mode of transport used by the Provost in relation to her civic duties. The annual costs to the Council of operating the civic car arise from lease payments (c£2,000 per annum) and staff costs for the Council Officers who undertake the driving. The staff costs comprise a proportion of the duties of Council Officers during their regular shifts, and overtime costs where driving duties are undertaken after hours and at weekends. The overtime costs in 2014/15 were approximately £13,000. It is proposed that alternative options for delivery of appropriate support be brought forward by officers for consideration by officers and Elected Members as part of the working group to be established in preparation for the new administration in 2017.

4. Proposals

4.1 *Members' Services*

4.1.1 In light of the findings presented to the Service and Performance Panel at paragraph 3.10.2 in the report to that Panel (see Appendix 1), the service review team concluded that no changes to accommodation, working practices or staff structure should be recommended at this stage, but proposes that further work be undertaken by officers to consider the support required by Elected Members, including the Provost, in preparation for a new administration in 2017.

4.2 *Civic/ Council Officers – Reception at County Buildings*

4.2.1 The service review team noted that significant strands of improvement work are underway within the Council in relation to printing and postage, and that these might result in changes to the volumes of business handled in the print room and mail room. Accordingly, the service review team did not undertake an overlapping review of whether printing should be outsourced.

4.2.2 The service review team reached the view that if the print room and mail room could be located more closely to reception, there would be potential for greater flexibility across the staffing of those three functions, and recognised that there is wider improvement work already underway that will consider this.

4.2.3 It was also recognised that configuring reception to allow clerical work to be undertaken there would further enhance efficiency in service delivery.

4.2.4 Accordingly, it is proposed that service delivery be further reviewed under delegated powers at an operational level as the various strands of improvement work develop, and that no changes to the staff structure be considered at this stage.

4.2.5 In relation to the current practice of having staff at Level 6 and Level 8 providing chauffeuring services to the Provost, it is recommended that officers continue to review this matter to inform relevant discussions with Members as part of the review of arrangements in advance of the local elections in 2017.

4.3 ***Civic/ Council Officers – Opening Hours of County Buildings***

4.3.1 It is further proposed that the opening hours for County Buildings, should be shortened, the hours to be determined by the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation.

4.4 ***Civic Recognition and Civic Budget***

4.4.1 The service review team reached the view that within a small civic budget, currently £13,893, there is merit in decisions being taken quickly and nimbly, rather than being split between officers below £1,000 and Elected Members, through the General Purposes Panel, above £1,000. The service review team proposes that officers should manage the entire civic budget without reference to the General Purposes Panel. If this proposal is approved by the Leadership Panel, this will be referred on to full Council for final agreement..

4.4.2 New guidelines for civic recognition, reflecting the principles outlined at paragraph 3.10.4 (iii) of the report to the Service and Performance Panel (see Appendix 1), should be developed and implemented. It is proposed that this task be delegated to the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation.

5. **Resource Implications**

5.1 ***Financial***

None.

5.2 ***Legal***

None.

5.3 ***Human Resources***

None at this stage, but implications will be considered as detailed proposals come forward in relation to proposed and ongoing review work.

6. **Risk**

6.1 ***Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations***– none.

6.2 ***Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations***-

6.2.1 rejecting recommendation 2 carries the risk of delaying progress in ensuring services are delivered efficiently; and

6.2.2 no risks arise from rejecting recommendations 1 and 3.

7. Equalities

- 7.1 The proposals in this report have been assessed through the Equalities Impact Assessment Scoping process, and there are no significant positive or negative equality impacts of agreeing the recommendations, therefore an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. A copy of the Equalities Scoping Assessment is attached as Appendix 4.

8. Sustainable Development Implications

- 8.1 This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

9. Options Appraisal

- 9.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

10. Link to Council Plan

- 10.1 The proposals contained in this report link to the Council Plan strategic objective: 'Improve the way that we work as a Council'.

11. Results of Consultation

- 11.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this paper.
- 11.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Robin Reid, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance.
- 11.3 Consultation has taken place with Trade Unions.

12. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes

- 12.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services will ensure that the following steps are taken within the following timescales, with progress reported to the Leadership Panel in the 'Council and Leadership Panel Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the steps are completed:

<i>Steps to be taken</i>	<i>By what date</i>	<i>Managed by</i>
Members/ officers working group established	30 June 2016	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Remit of General Purposes Panel amended to reflect delegation of civic budget to officers	30 June 2016	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Standard opening hours of County Buildings to be shortened	31 March 2016	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
New guidelines for civic reception finalised and launched	30 September 2016	Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Background Papers Report to Leadership Panel of 2 December 2014 – [Service Review Scopes](#)

Report to Service and Performance Panel of 26 January 2016 -
Service Review of Democratic Support (Members only)

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Date: 8 February 2016

Summary of Report to Service and Performance Panel of 26 January 2016

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the proposals arising from the service review of the Democratic Support service.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Panel:

- (1) considers and scrutinises the findings and proposals of the Democratic Support service review;
- (2) agrees that the findings and the following proposals be presented to the Leadership Panel for approval not later than February 2016:
 - (a) that further work be undertaken by officers to consider the support required by Elected Members, including the Provost, in preparation for a new administration in 2017, and to consider changes in working practices accordingly;
 - (b) that further work be undertaken by officers to consider the physical layout of reception in County Buildings and the possibility that the print room and the mail room be moved closer to reception, as part of the Office Accommodation project – upgrade works to County Buildings;
 - (c) subject to satisfactory alternative arrangements being made for those who currently make use of County Buildings in the evenings, that the standard opening hours of County Buildings be shortened;
 - (d) that Council be asked to delegate the entire civic budget to officers; and
 - (e) that new guidelines for civic recognition be developed by officers in line with the principles set out at paragraph 3.10.4 (3) in this report; and
- (3) notes the changes to the structure within the Committee Services team that have been made by the Chief Executive under her delegated powers, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

3. Background

- 3.1 Following the introduction of the Council's service review process in September 2014, the Democratic Support service has been reviewed, with the following objectives:

- (1) to consider the staff structure of the teams within the service;
- (2) to examine the remits and working practices of these services to ensure all staff are working as effectively and efficiently as possible, and to minimise as far as possible the issues that can arise at times of high demand and/ or staff absence;

- (3) to examine areas where service could be improved as a result of reorganising resources and/ or making greater use of technology and/ or eliminating duplication;
- (4) to consider whether we can stop undertaking or scale back any activities we currently undertake;
- (5) to consider whether it would be economical to outsource functions, for example printing;
- (6) specifically, to consider the support that is required by the Provost;
- (7) to consider the use that is made of County Buildings by third parties, and when it is open; and
- (8) to look at the relationship between (1) the civic hospitality function and how decisions in relation to it are made; and (2) the remit of the General Purposes Panel.

3.2 The service review scope was approved by the Leadership Panel on 2 December 2014.

3.3 The review commenced in January 2015 and is now complete. The review took longer than anticipated due to a number of unplanned changes in personnel in the committee services team, and the pressures arising from the election in May and the by election in September. The service review team included representation from Committee Services, Members' Services, the Civic Office, a Council/ Civic Officer, and Human Resources.

3.4 In addition to the service review team, the review has been considered and scrutinised by a challenge team, chaired by Head of Legal and Democratic Services and consisting of the Executive Director – Resources, Governance and Organisation, a representative from the Civic Office, a member of the Communications team and Trade Union representation. The challenge team made a number of suggestions and recommendations that helped shape this report.

3.5 The Democratic Support service comprises the following services:

- (1) Committee Services;
- (2) Members' Services;
- (3) the Civic Office;
- (4) the operation of County Buildings, including setting up meeting rooms, the reception service, and the operation of the mail room and the print room; and
- (5) the administration of elections.

3.6 In accordance with the approved service review framework, the service review team considered the following questions in relation to each of these service areas:

- (1) Why are we doing this?
- (2) Can we run the service smarter/better?
- (3) How efficient and economical are we and could we improve it?
- (4) Are we getting as much income as we should?
- (5) Can/ should we reduce the level of service?
- (6) Can we stop the service entirely?
- (7) Would there be a benefit in others delivering the service?
- (8) Would there be a benefit in sharing the service or undertaking it via joint venture with other local authorities?

3.7 It was recognised at the start of the review that questions (2) and (3) would be the prime focus of the review, and so the other questions were not analysed in any detail, other than to note the following points:

- ***Why are we doing this?*** While all of the services within the Democratic Support service support core Council functions, such as decision-making, the administration of elections, supporting a civic function and running Council headquarters, there are always choices to be made as a Council as to the extent to which those activities are undertaken, and therefore the resources necessary to support them. There are also choices to be made regarding the ways in which we work, for example, the extent to which we use technology, the amount of paper we use, and the processes we adopt. The implementation of the ICT Review will have an impact on these. There are other examples that are more visible to the public, such as the support we provide to the Provost and other elected members in the community, arrangements for Council meetings and the frequency and type of civic functions we support.
- ***Are we getting as much income as we should?*** The services within Democratic Support do not generate income, although the review team noted that the service does apply an internal recharge for printing services that should be reviewed through the wider improvement work that is underway in relation to our printing and postage processes, and also through the corporate budgeting process.
- ***Can/ should we reduce the level of service?*** The service review team recognised a number of opportunities to reduce the level of service in certain areas and concluded that these should be addressed as part of the Council's preparations for the new administration in 2017. The service review team also noted that other opportunities to change the ways we work will arise from wider improvement work. Accordingly, the review team concentrated on the key questions of how the services can be delivered smarter/better, and how efficient and economical are we and could we improve these.
- ***Can we stop the service entirely?*** This question was answered in the negative, and was not considered further.
- ***Would there be a benefit in sharing the service or undertaking it via joint venture with other local authorities?*** - The service review team decided that this was not a feasible option given the nature of the services provided and the geographical spread of the areas covered by our Council and its immediate neighbours, and so was not considered further.

3.8 The team also recognised that there have been a number of recent changes to the types of work undertaken within the Committee Services team. Following the structure review in 2014 the Committee Services team has taken over education appeals and related work and the room bookings service from other teams, and has been adapting its working practices to provide appropriate support to our new scrutiny panel structure.

3.9 The findings and proposals of the service review team are set out below.

3.10 ***Findings***

3.10.1 **Committee Services**

- (1) The current Committee Services structure consists of the Co-ordinator - Democratic Support at Level 13, supported by four Level 8 Committee Services Officers and two clerical assistants (Level 2 and Level 3). See the diagram at Appendix 1.
- (2) The Committee Services team has been working towards a number of service improvements that have been identified by Members and officers over the last few years. These changes include:

- * devising and implementing improved arrangements for the support provided to scrutiny panels;
 - * taking a lead in relation to our improvement work in relation to Audit Scotland's 'Delivering Good Governance' Framework;
 - * bringing a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to Elected Members' induction, training and development, including topics for Elected Member briefings;
 - * reviewing and maintaining the Elected Members portal; and
 - * reviewing and improving arrangements in relation to Elected Members' caseload management.
- (3) These improvements are high priorities, and they have to be delivered without an increased staff resource. Accordingly, the review team recognised that there is considerable ongoing work involved in refining processes to become more consistent and efficient, with greater use of technology, particularly where this can create savings in terms of printing and distributing paper. The review team considered whether we are making best use of the staffing resource to ensure we are able to deliver these improvements effectively.
- (4) Five significant operational issues were identified during the service review:
- (i) Particularly during elections, there is a shortage of capacity at an appropriately senior level to make progress with the necessary improvement work;
 - (ii) The direct line management currently undertaken by the Co-ordinator - Democratic Support covers a diverse range of services across the democratic support structure, from Level 8 down to Level 2. This absorbs capacity at a senior level that needs to be directed at more strategic work.
 - (iii) The following areas of work have recently moved into Committee Services from other areas within the Legal and Democratic structure:
 - * the diary and committee rooms booking system; and
 - * supporting the Local Attendance Council in respect of attendance defaults exclusions, early entries and appeals.
 - (iv) Having four Committee Services Officers (Level 8) directly beneath the Co-ordinator, supported by a Level 3 and a Level 2, also means that there are support and administrative tasks undertaken at Level 8 that can properly be undertaken at a lower level, but which carry more responsibility than can be given to the staff at Level 3 and Level 2.
 - (v) Succession planning is difficult in Committee Services, because of the absence of any role between the Committee Services Officers at Level 8 and the administrative support at Levels 2 and 3. It takes a considerable period of time to train a new Committee Services Officer. This could be made easier by having an intermediate role. This point, and point (iv) above, suggested a need for an intermediate post between Level 8 and Level 3 / 2.
- (5) One of the Committee Services Officer posts (Level 8) became vacant during the period of the review. This presented an opportunity to review and reconfigure staffing arrangements (within existing budgetary provision) and this was approved by the Chief Executive under her delegated authority. These are summarised in Appendix 1.

3.10.2 Members' Services

The service review team considered whether the level of support to Elected Members could be improved by having the team located together rather than in separate rooms, particularly when covering periods of absence due to holidays, illness, etc., and undertook some preliminary work to look at accommodation. The service review team found merit in this proposal but recognised that the considerations arising are best discussed in a working group comprising Elected Members and Officers in anticipation of a new administration in 2017.

3.10.3 Civic/ Council Officers and County Buildings

- (1) The service review team identified a number of management and operational issues and inefficiencies arising from the current structure and these are listed below.
 - How to cover holiday and unplanned absences in an efficient manner across the various small teams that support County Buildings functions, including Council / Civic Officers, reception, the mail room and the print room.
 - Existing job descriptions envisage that chauffeuring the Provost should be undertaken at Levels 4 and 6, with the Level 8 having responsibility for ensuring this cover is provided. Because of the personal commitments of staff at Level 4, out of hours driving is undertaken exclusively by the Civic/ Council Officers at Levels 6 and 8.
 - During the year to 31 March 2015 the two members of staff who undertook these driving duties out of hours were paid overtime of approximately £13,000 for doing so, equating to approximately 560 hours at time and a half, and 100 hours at single time, which is a concern not just in terms of the financial cost, but also in terms of the hours being worked by individuals.
 - Having members of the Civic/ Council team away from County Buildings whilst undertaking driving duties during core hours, often at short notice, can also create management difficulties in ensuring the smooth running of County Buildings, and on occasions has meant that it was not possible for the Provost to be driven to events.
 - A procurement exercise has recently commenced in relation to the Council's fleet of over 200 multi-functional printers (known as 'MFDs'), which involves the preparation of a printing strategy that will inform the specification of the contract for the MFDs.
 - The printing strategy and the wider review of our printing and postage practices is a key piece of improvement work that will in due course include a wider review of the financial, accommodation and human resources we allocate to supporting our printing activities.
 - During holidays and periods of unplanned absence, the review team noted that it is often necessary to have higher graded staff covering lower graded roles, and vice versa, due to the small size of the various teams and the way job descriptions are currently drawn.
 - There is no dedicated staff resource to cover reception within the staff structure and after a period of trialling different arrangements, the Chief Executive has approved the creation of a 12 month temporary post at Level 3 to cover reception, using existing resources within Legal and Democratic Services, to allow time for a wider improvement work to progress.

- A significant redesign of reception would enable the staff based at reception to also undertake other administrative tasks as this would create sufficient working space that is appropriate for such work.
- There is wider improvement work underway that may enable us to relocate the print room and mail room closer to reception, which would allow greater flexibility for the relevant staff to support each other and provide cover.
- County Buildings is currently open from 7.00 am until 7.00 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and from 7.00 am to 10.00 pm on Wednesdays. The service review team gathered evidence that there are generally very few staff working in County Buildings prior to 7.45 am and beyond 6.00 pm. It was noted that the Labour Group meets in County Buildings on Monday evenings.
- The following groups currently make use of County Buildings on Wednesday evenings:
 - * Alcoholics Anonymous;
 - * Narcotics Anonymous;
 - * The Children's Panel;
 - * The Town Twinning Forum; and
 - * Fort and Seafeld Community Council.

Recognising that County Buildings is primarily the administrative headquarters of the Council, it was thought likely that there are other Council-owned buildings that are in use by the community in the evenings that are more suitable venues for these groups and that meetings in County Buildings should be restricted to 8.00am to 6.00pm as a rule.

3.10.4 Civic Recognition and Civic Budget

- (1) The annual civic budget is currently £13,893. Expenditure above £1,000 for a single event is currently considered by the General Purposes Panel. Remitting decisions on relatively low amounts within a small budget to a Panel creates delays and, in terms of costs of Officer and Member time, is an expensive way of reaching decisions. A more efficient approach would be for officers to have delegated authority over the entire budget, working to appropriate guidelines.
- (2) When recognising civic achievement, it is imperative that the Council achieves the best value it can with this small budget, and consideration was given to refreshing the guidelines for civic recognition.
- (3) The service review team reviewed a number of existing documents, looked at examples from other Councils, and met with the Provost with a view to identifying broad principles that could inform revised guidelines for civic recognition. The following principles were identified:
 - the Council, through the Provost as Civic Leader, should seek to formally recognise achievements by people and organisations in South Ayrshire that demonstrate a valuable contribution to our communities and/or to South Ayrshire's standing nationally and internationally;
 - the Council should not make financial awards to individuals and organisations who are proposing to arrange their own events to recognise civic achievement;

- civic recognition can take various forms and would normally include appropriate hospitality;
- guidelines for civic recognition should be published on the Council's website, with appropriate communications to raise their profile and to encourage applications and nominations;
- evaluation and award criteria should be published on the Council's website; and
- the Council should hold a small number of main events for civic recognition, at times of year that are made known to the public in advance, and in combination with wider Council reward and recognition ceremonies, where appropriate.

4. Proposals

4.1 *Committee Services*

4.1.1 In order to address the issues described at paragraph 3.11.1 above, and meet pressing staffing requirements given vacancies arising, the Chief Executive has used her delegated powers to amend the structure as shown in Appendix 1.

4.2 *Members' Services*

4.2.1 In light of the findings presented at paragraph 3.10.2 above, the service review team concluded that no changes to accommodation, working practices or staff structure should be recommended at this stage, but proposes that further work be undertaken by officers to consider the support required by Elected Members, including the Provost, in preparation for a new administration in 2017.

4.3 *Civic/ Council Officers and County Buildings*

4.3.1 The service review team noted that significant strands of improvement work are underway within the Council in relation to printing and postage, and that these might result in changes to the volumes of business handled in the print room and mail room. Accordingly, the service review team did not undertake an overlapping review of whether printing should be outsourced.

4.3.2 The service review team reached the view that if the print room and mail room could be located more closely to reception, there would be potential for greater flexibility across the staffing of those three functions, and recognised that there is wider improvement work already underway that will consider this.

4.3.3 It was also recognised that configuring reception to allow clerical work to be undertaken there would further support changes in service delivery.

4.3.4 Accordingly, it is proposed that service delivery be further reviewed at management level as the various strands of improvement work develop, and that no changes to the staff structure be considered at this stage.

4.3.5 In relation to the current practice of having staff at Level 6 and Level 8 providing chauffeuring services to the Provost, it is recommended that officers continue to review this matter as part of the review of arrangements in advance of the local elections in 2017.

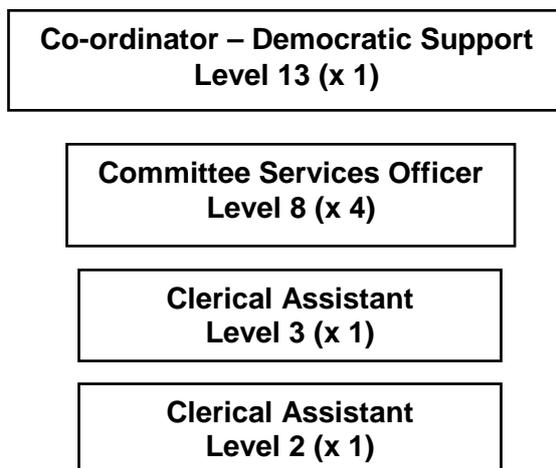
4.3.6 It is further proposed that, subject to satisfactory alternative arrangements being made for existing evening activities within County Buildings, the opening hours for County Buildings, should be shortened if and when suitable alternative accommodation can be found for the groups that currently make use of County Buildings outwith business hours.

4.4 ***Civic Recognition and Civic Budget***

- 4.4.1 The service review team reached the view that within a small civic budget, currently £13,893, there is merit in decisions being taken quickly and nimbly, rather than being split between officers below £1,000 and Elected Members, through the General Purposes Panel, above £1,000. The service review team proposes that officers should manage the entire civic budget without reference to the General Purposes Panel and that this be considered by Council at an appropriate early opportunity.
- 4.4.2 New guidelines for civic recognition, reflecting the principles outlined at paragraph 3.10.4 (3) above, should be created and launched.

Team structures

Previous structure:



New structure:



DRAFT



**EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF
THE SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE PANEL
OF 26TH JANUARY 2016**

Service Review of Democratic Support.

There was submitted a report (issued to Members only) of 15th December 2015 detailing the proposals arising from the Service Review of the Democratic Support Service.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services gave an introduction and background to the report. Clarification was sought on various issues including

- (1) the layout of the reception area at the County Buildings and the siting of the mail room and print room and the cost effectiveness of any changes;
- (2) the use and cost effectiveness of the civic car;
- (3) the security of the County Buildings;
- (4) the savings that could be achieved by the proposals; and
- (5) the need for Elected Members to be consulted in relation to the support provided for them.

Decided: having scrutinised the findings and proposals for the Democratic Support Service, to agree that, having taken on board this Panel's comments, the findings and the following proposals be presented to the Leadership Panel for approval, scheduled to take place on 16th February 2016, to include:-

- (a) clarification that there should be Elected Member representation on the appropriate Working Group to consider arrangements for the change of administration in 2017;
- (b) an assessment of the need for the Council to have a civic car; and
- (c) further explanation regarding the revenue savings that may arise from recommendation 2(b) of the report.

South Ayrshire Council Equalities Scoping Template

1. Policy details

Policy Title	Lead Officer
Service Review of Democratic Support	Ralph Riddiough

2. Which communities, groups of people, employees or thematic groups do you think will be, or potentially could be, impacted upon by the implementation of this policy? Please indicate whether these would be positive or negative impacts

Community, Groups of People or Themes	Negative Impacts	Positive impacts
The whole community of South Ayrshire	-	-
People from different racial groups, ethnic or national origin.	-	-
Women and/or men (boys and girls)	-	-
People with disabilities	-	-
People from particular age groups for example Older people, children and young people	-	-
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people	-	-
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process to change sex	-	-
Pregnant women and new mothers	-	-
People who are married or in a civil partnership	-	-
People who share a particular religion or belief	-	-
Thematic Groups: Health, Human Rights, Rurality and Deprivation.	-	-

3. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that the policy will support the Council to:

General Duty and other Equality Themes	Level of Negative and/or Positive Impact (high, medium or low)
Eliminate discrimination and harassment faced by particular communities or groups	Low impact
Promote equality of opportunity between particular communities or groups	Low impact
Foster good relations between particular communities or groups	Low impact
Promote positive attitudes towards different communities or groups	Low impact
Increase participation of particular communities or groups in public life	Low impact
Improve the health and wellbeing of particular communities or groups	Low impact
Promote the human rights of particular communities or groups	Low impact
Tackle deprivation faced by particular communities or groups	Low impact

4. Summary Assessment

Is a full Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) required? (A full EQIA must be carried out on all high and medium impact policies)	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rationale for decision: The service review does not propose or recommend changes which would have any significant impact on protected groups	
Ralph Riddiough Signed _____ Head of Service	
Date: 15 December 2015	Copy to equalities@south-ayrshire.gov.uk