

WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO: Resources Sub-Committee - 7th February 2000

SUBJECT: Property Services Business Unit

FROM: Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1_ To approve the first stage of a re-structuring of the Property Services Unit. This relates to the technical section (Surveying and Clerk of Works).

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 On 19th October 1998 this sub-committee agreed to the merger of the existing Property Business Unit with the Technical Division within the Housing Business Unit.

2.2 It was intended that the new Unit would have a greater involvement on larger Corporate Property Building projects, which it is doing, and utilise consultants more on Property Management, which was the previous Head of Property's forte.

2.3 Although the merger took place in October 1998 the two units were not physically located together until the end of May 1999 when Phase I of the Leamington House move was completed. At that time it was determined that a review of the new Unit should take place before the end of 1999/2000. This review would take account of the workload and operation of the Surveying and Site Supervision Section, Energy Management, Property Management and the Administration of the Unit. The objective of this is to prepare for Best Value, which will include the D.E.T.R.'s requirement for a detailed Asset Management Plan for the Council's Corporate Property (The Government's proposals are currently at consultation stage).

2.4 In addition the Chief Executive had specifically requested a review of the Property Management operation now that it was largely centred around one member of staff, the Estates Surveyor, albeit with more Consultant support than had previously existed. This is being done in parallel with an Internal Audit review of the Council's Management of its Property Portfolio, which also encompasses Legal and Finance operations.

2.5 Due to the retirement of two members of staff in the technical section, it is necessary for me to make two initial recommendations, which form part of the review before it is fully completed and reported to members on 27th March 2000. The remainder of the review relates to general administration and property management.

2.6 The Unions have been consulted on the proposals in 3.2 and do not object to them.

3. PROPOSALS

3.1 It should be noted that the cost of all the proposed changes resulting from the full review will be met from within existing resources.

3.2 It is proposed to:-

3.2.1 Create a trainee post on a six year fixed term contract to enable the

successful applicant to study for a five year part-time degree in Building Surveying. The additional period after their degree would provide some time for the postholder to find permanent employment if an appropriate post was not available at Warwick District Council. There is an established trainee career grade that starts at H and progresses to E1 commensurate with achievement.

and 3.2.2 There are currently three posts in the Clerk of Works section. The post of Senior Clerk of Works (Band D) is now vacant and is to be re-evaluated by the H.A.Y. Panel. My view is that it will be banded E₂. In addition I would propose that the post of Technical Inspector (Band F) be deleted and replaced with one for a Clerk of Works (Band E₁). This would result in a Senior Clerk of Works in charge of two other Clerk of Works and should strengthen our site supervision service.

4. KEY ISSUE STRATEGIES

The measures in this report will influence the Social Corporate Strategy for our youth with the creation of an additional training position and the Environmental Key Issue by enhancing the quality of service in EN3 and EN4.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 To approve the proposals set out in Section 3.

John Whittle
Head of Property Services

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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Areas in District Affected: All