



City of Westminster

This matter is being dealt with by:

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Paul Houston
Director
Westminster Property Owners Association
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Dear Paul

I am writing to you to explain why we are about to start reducing the number of jobs at Westminster Council. I also want to reassure you that we are doing this to improve the service we offer to residents, businesses and visitors to the city.

I want to create an organisation which will have a stronger focus on commissioning services to enhance the way we meet the needs of people. It will mean moving from the existing structure of departments to a council consisting of delivery units focusing on serving customers, support units providing corporate expertise and commissioning functions to assess need and identify the future shape of services. All these teams will come under the Strategic Executive Board which has now operated successfully for six months.

The new organisation will be more focused on priority projects, but will also have to be more efficient, reducing the number of people we employ by up to 270 posts over the next year. Recently we have issued 'vulnerability' letters to a number of staff and reported our plans, as the law requires, to central government. Our Cabinet has been updated on the proposals for the new structure, which establish a commissioning framework and set out plans to reduce the total number of posts and save £12 million.

We are currently in the formal stage of consultation on the new structure and proposed job losses. I would expect to begin to have our new structure in place by the autumn. Formal approval to the new structure will not be sought until the end of September.

I do not believe that you will see a reduction in the quality of service that we offer to you and other people we serve but the news of job losses is a tough message for people working in any organisation. All public authorities will have to retrench in the next few years. We have chosen a path of fundamental reorganisation which will be difficult but the alternative - arbitrary cuts - would be even worse for the council and the community.

Westminster will remain a successful council with dedicated staff and committed partners. We will adapt to a tougher climate in terms of public expectation and limited resources.

With this letter is a note that sets out the key principles of the new council organisation.

This is a major change. We want the period of uncertainty to be as short as possible for everyone concerned. We want to preserve the strengths of the City Council and, lower resources notwithstanding, continue to improve so that we serve the City even better.

You can find details of the new structure at www.westminster.gov.uk/newcouncil.

If you have any queries on the proposals, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I will keep you informed as we progress to a new Council.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike More', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Mike More
Chief Executive

Westminster's new council organisation

The key elements of the new structure are as follows:

- A small **Strategic Executive Board**, to provide overall management leadership to the Council
- **Pooled Support Units**, to provide generic support functions across the Council
- **Delivery Units**, to provide direct services across the range of activities provided by the Council
- **A commissioning team**, to translate priority areas with agreed measurable outcomes and secure these either internally or in partnership with others
- **Local delivery mechanisms**, encompassing on the one hand, for example, mechanisms which create a 'single view of the street' for City Management purposes through to neighbourhood hubs which rationalise the array of services and physical premises we have at neighbourhood level.

The remodelling of the Council is designed around a number of key principles:

- To create an organisational model which has a **strong focus** on strategic commissioning of services to meet the needs of the City. This recognises our role as the organisation where the overall needs of the City are analysed, understood and responsive strategies are developed.
- To build a **sustainable model** which is capable of handling the current and foreseeable financial pressure.
- To drive **greater connection** and co-ordination of services than is currently the norm and eliminate unnecessary duplication.
- To enhance the **scope for integration** and joint working with other public and third sector agencies as norm.

Strategic Executive Board

The Strategic Board has been in existence since January and encompasses:

Chief Executive (Chair): Mike More (Head of Paid Service, Communications and Strategy, Finance)

Deputy Chief Executive: John Barradell (responsible for Economic Development, Housing, Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Emergency Planning)

Strategic Director for Children and Young People: Michael O'Connor (responsible for schools, learning, services for children, young people and families)

Strategic Director for Adult and Community Services: Marian Harrington (responsible for Adult Social Care and relationships with Health, Libraries and Culture, Sports and Leisure)

Strategic Director for Built Environment: Rosemarie MacQueen (responsible for Local Development Planning, Capital transportation schemes, Development Control)

Strategic Director for City Management: Leith Penny (responsible for street and premises management including parking)

Strategic Director for Resources (acting): Alastair Gilchrist (responsible for Procurement and Contract Management, Property, Information Services, HR).

Commissioning Arrangements

Commissioning is the central concept of our proposed new model. Commissioning is the continuous process of assessing evidenced need, translating into priority outcomes and ensuring delivery. It is also the process of connecting outcomes in a more systematic way, so where for example, the contribution which housing conditions make to educational attainment or planning policy to tackling anti-social or criminal behaviour, is properly understood.

The Commissioning team will include:

- **Strategic Housing** (largely unchanged from the current housing arrangements) with a continued focus on driving the Council's Housing and Regeneration Strategy, (Housing is currently largely commissioning in nature, with separate delivery arrangements through CityWest, RSLs and other contracted providers).
- **Transportation** with responsibility for establishing and prioritising future transportation capital needs and the current management of other highways infrastructure.
- Joint arrangements with NHS Westminster for commissioning some **Adults and Children's Services**.
- Specific commissioning levels to **Planning, Customer Services, Olympic and Civil Contingencies**.
- Generic commissioning for Integrated City Management (**Parking, Cleansing, Waste**) designed to propel greater integration to the City Management services.

Delivery Units

The new Delivery Units are largely taking on the customer facing work done by the former Departments and we have taken the opportunity to integrate common services where sensible at this stage. The proposed units are:

Schools and Learning
Children, Young People and Families
Sports and Leisure
Libraries and Culture
Adult Social Care

City Planning
Development Planning Management
Street Management
Premises Management

Support Units

Detailed work has also been done to shape pooled Support Units. These are so designed as to maximise flexibility and enhance capacity in key areas, such as project management and procurement. Lead officers have been tasked with ensuring a common understanding of provision between support units and delivery units. The proposed units are as follows:

Communication & Strategy
Procurement and Contract
Management
Transformation and Project
Management
Planning and Performance

Policy, Innovation and Partnership
ICT
Finance
Legal and Administrative Services
Property