

TENANTS' AND LEASEHOLDERS' PANEL
1 February 2012

Lead Officer: Managing Director of Croydon Landlord Services

Wards: All

Agenda Item: 8

Subject: Reorganisation of Croydon Landlord Services

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 The Panel is asked to comment on the proposed CLS reorganisation.

2. BACKGROUND

The Council has introduced various programmes and projects in recent years which have generated opportunities for us to reshape the way we deliver our housing management service that will enable us to get closer to our customers, improve customer satisfaction, enable staff to work in a streamlined management structure and for us to provide an efficient and effective service taking us forward to meet future challenges. The new structure embraces a number of key change features.

- Step change
- Layers and spans
- Unification
- New ways of working
- Culture change

2.1 Step Change

As part of developing the Council's Target Operating Model it was decided that the housing landlord role as a service provider would be retained in-house but the functions would be separated from the client role. This would enable Croydon landlord services to be held properly to account for performance as any other

provider and to demonstrate its ability to provide high quality value for money services. In June 2011 the Housing management directorate became Croydon landlord services and a number of job title changes were introduced at a senior level. On 1 November 2011, Croydon Landlord services commenced operating under a formal service level agreement.

2.2 Layers and spans

The step change programme also looked at the need to ensure there are consistent management spans of control and that there are not too many layers of management hierarchy across the council. A report was produced in January 2011 by DMA consultancy concerning Layers and Spans in DASHH. The report identified over-layering in three service areas within housing management;

- Responsive repairs (Repairs technical manager and Senior repairs officer)
- Planned maintenance and improvements (Chief Engineer and direct reports)
- Neighbourhood services (Neighbourhood service managers and direct reports)

As a result, proposed changes to the structure were put forward and accepted by the Layers and Spans Board in November 2011. The new structure has been developed using the guidance recommended for effective layers and spans of control.

2.3 New ways of working

‘Transforming Our Space’ is a programme that is modernising the Council by updating our technology and working environments so that staff can work more easily, efficiently and flexibly. This will also enable us to be a high performing organisation by investing in mobile working in order to work more effectively and achieve excellence in customer service.

The availability of mobile technologies such as laptops and PC tablets/notebooks will enable staff to be as mobile as possible and be able to access back office systems from multiple locations. This means staff will be able to deliver services directly to customers in their own homes and to capture and send back information to customer information systems in ‘real time’.

2.4 Unification

The move to the new Public Service Delivery Hub (now known as Bernard Weatherill House or if an earlier move to Davis House becomes viable), presents an additional opportunity to streamline how we work and also to modernise. The new building will have less occupancy and less storage and this means increasing the use of electronic document storage and retrieval and moving to the new ways of working for a number of staff.

The main impact will be moving the district based landlord service teams from Strand House and New Addington. However, it is proposed that the new generic

Access Croydon hub at New Addington will deal with initial housing enquiries whereas the proposed new CALAT reception at Strand House will sign post housing service users to Taberner House. Both offices will have touch down facilities including access to interview rooms. Residents who have mobility or special needs difficulties and customers who need to be seen in an office environment by appointment will be the main focus for officers using these facilities.

Unification will impact on the matrix responsibilities which were previously introduced to manage continuity of service delivery across three district teams working from district offices. There will no longer be a need for officers to have matrix responsibilities or matrix meetings as managers will be working together from a central location. However managers already have responsibilities for leading in specific areas of the service and this principle will be continued.

2.5 Culture change

For some time we have been introducing service delivery improvements which work towards putting the customer first, resolving customers' issues at the first point of contact, improving customer satisfaction and reducing complaints. Our strength in meeting performance targets and the delivery of these quality services has been based on the principle of having specialist teams. We are standing by this principle in the new service structure but recognising the need to achieve a more seamless service delivery focused on the customer.

The reorganisation and the introduction of new mobile working technology and data access systems opens up an exciting possibility of going the extra mile to enable front line staff to ask the customer the question "is there anything else I can help you with today" and then to be able to sign post customers to the relevant services.

The contact experience presents this opportunity to identify that customers have needs that may benefit from other services or to use the contact to convey information to customers. By maximising the resources invested especially in the home visit we will not only achieve efficiency savings but increase customer and job satisfaction. Visiting officers will be encouraged to be observant of the customer and the property and to use a check list to highlight whether there are signposting, reporting or information needs that need addressing. All staff within Croydon landlord services will be encouraged to embrace the ability to maximise the technology available when responding to customer contact. This has been reflected in the updated role profiles for staff.

3. PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE STRUCTURE

As a consequence of the layers and spans review, a number of posts have increased levels of responsibility for staff management and supervision and for decision making. Some new posts have been created and some old ones deleted. Some minor changes are being made to Responsive repairs and Planned maintenance and improvements services but these are outside direct the scope of this restructuring.

3.1 Landlord services- Heads of service

At service head level there has been a net reduction of one head of service post. A new post, Head of tenancy and estate services and a new head of Income and lettings will have strategic service responsibilities. A big challenge for these post holders is to drive forward the Council's Step Change agenda though the delivery and management of the service adopting new ways of working.

3.2 Head of Tenancy and estate services

This is a new post with strategic responsibility for Tenancy management, Caretaking and Neighbourhood Wardens and a Tenancy and Estate services co-ordinator. In addition to managing the strategic planning and delivery of a comprehensive range of housing management and estate services to Council tenants and leaseholders, the post holder will provide professional expertise and direction in the development of high quality services. This will ensure that statutory and performance requirements are met.

A new resource of Tenancy and estate services co-ordinator, reporting to the Head of Tenancy and estate services, will line manage three new Estate inspector posts. Securing improvements in the delivery of cleaning standards, Streetscene estate services, grounds maintenance and window cleaning contracts will be a key aim for the post holders. The posts will also provide a resource to work with tenancy and estate services teams and the Managing Director to develop new initiatives, policies and procedures and to coordinate services with the other heads of service.

3.3 Head of income and lettings

This is a new post with strategic responsibility for the planning and delivery of a comprehensive range of income and letting services to Council tenants and leaseholders. The post has responsibilities reflecting the importance of maximising the efficient letting and income recovery from the housing stock and will demand professional expertise and direction in the development of high quality services to ensure that statutory and performance requirements are met.

3.4 Head of Service development

Last autumn the span of the Service development team was extended to include five new posts in the Tenancy audit team and a new post of Project manager. The restructuring consolidates these changes and provides additional resources to support the development of key projects. The Head of service development has a strategic role in developing the safe and community engagement agenda across the Council's housing estates with specific focus on vulnerable and under represented groups within the community.

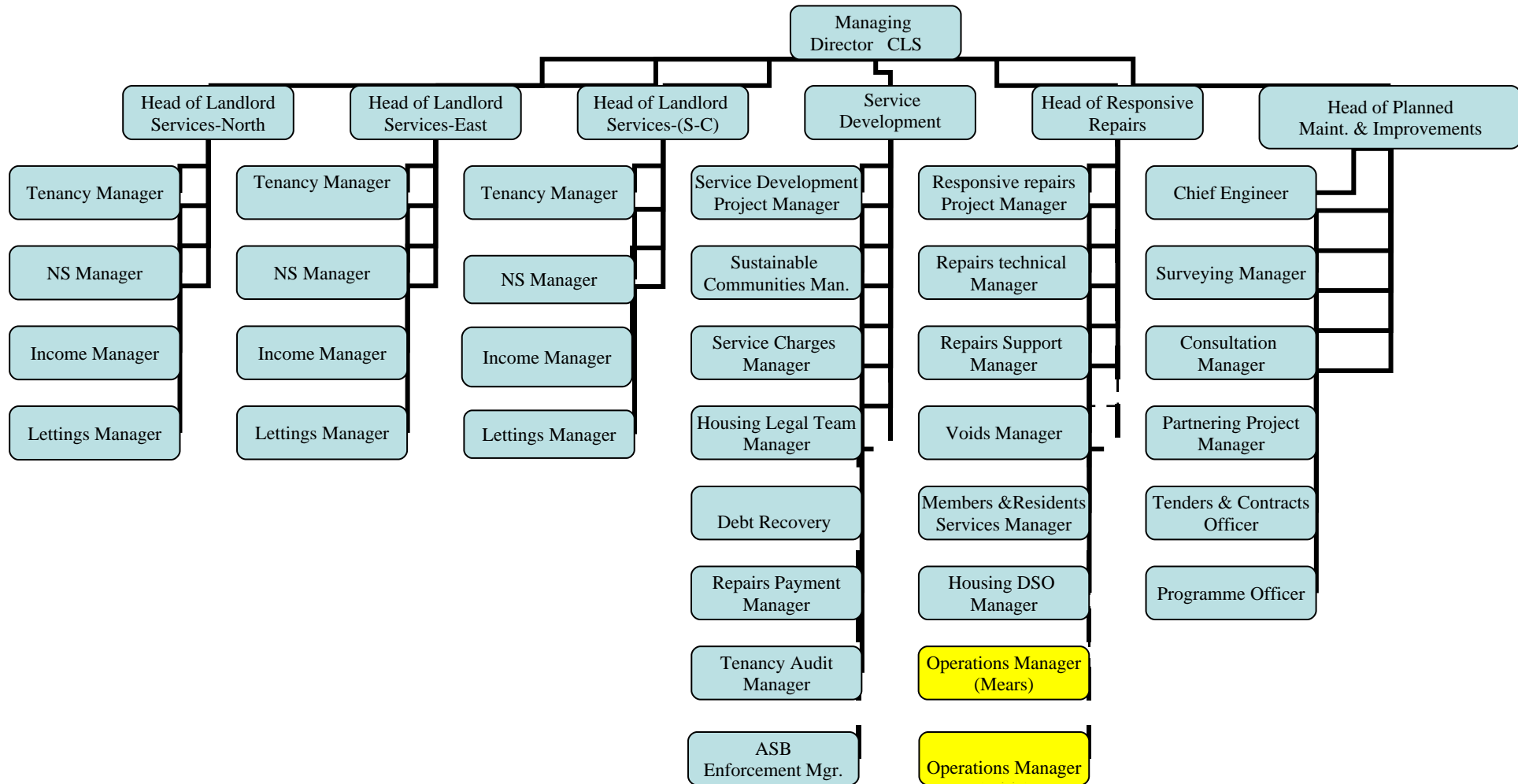
4. STAFFING NUMBERS WITHIN EACH PROPOSED SERVICE AREA

Service	New Structure
Tenancy and Estate services	114
Income and lettings	50
Service development	28.1
Responsive repairs	36
Planned maintenance and improvements	33
Total	261.1

Summary of proposed new and deleted posts

New Posts	Deleted posts
Head of Tenancy and Estate Services	Head of Landlord Services x 3
Head of Income and Letting services	Neighbourhood Service Managers x 3
Tenancy and Estate Services Co-ordinator	Caretaking Managers x1
Estate inspectors x 3	Warden Manager x 1
	Lettings Manager x1
	Senior lettings officer x1

5. THE CURRENT STRUCTURE



6. THE PROPOSED NEW STRUCTURE

