

By: Alex King, Deputy Leader  
Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services & Local Leadership

To: Selection and Member Services Committee – 23 March 2010

Subject: Proposed Restructuring of the Community Liaison Team

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Summary: This report sets out for the Committee's comment and approval the proposals to restructure the Community Liaison Manager Team.

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## Introduction

(1) The County Council has a commitment to work with its partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors, to develop effective ways of working to liaise, inform and empower our local communities. The emerging legislative framework on promoting democracy, the economic downturn and on-going financial pressures across the public sector have brought this into sharp focus.

(2) The Committee will be aware that a number of different models of community engagement have been developed across the County, with the intention that a review of these models will be reported to the County Council in December this year. Current models range from Neighbourhood Fora in Dover, Gravesham and Maidstone, Local Engagement Fora in Swale, individual Member Neighbourhood Fora, and the development of a "Virtual Civic Space".

(3) A range of initiatives have also been developed to embrace the 'promoting democracy' and 'duty to involve' legislation. There have already been a number of events on the theme of Participatory Budgeting which were successful and these events have in turn enthused a number of other Members to pilot an event of their own.

## Proposed Restructuring of the Community Liaison Manager Team (CLMs)

(4) The CLM Team sits within the Legal & Democratic Services Unit and for day to day operation and line management responsibility reports to the Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager (Paul Wickenden). Attached as **Appendix 1** is the current structure showing 10 CLM posts (3 of which are not permanent but have been filled by secondment - one of these posts is vacant at the present time). Whilst there is funding for these posts in the base budget, they have not been made permanent pending decisions on the County Council's community engagement strategy. In addition, there are two permanent Business Support Officer posts, which provide vital support to the CLMs, particularly in relation to the grants process and support for meetings.

(5) There is a clear synergy between the emerging national frameworks for community empowerment and increased overview and scrutiny. It provides an opportunity to join the two together in an effective and non-bureaucratic way. The Leader and Cabinet Members have agreed that the role of the CLMs is pivotal in relation to enhanced two-tier working; community engagement and supporting Members in their roles as "community councillors"; they have agreed in principle that the resources for the team should be enhanced. Essentially, the following proposals are made:

- the existing CLM posts be re-named Community Engagement Managers (CEM)
- the two currently temporary posts be made permanent positions

- the overall resources for the team be increased from 10 CEMs to 12 CEMs, plus the two existing business support officers
- two of the 12 CEMs should be appointed as team leaders, each with responsibility for a geographical area (East and West Kent) with line management responsibility for the CEMs in those areas and one of the business support officers
- a recruitment exercise be undertaken to appoint the two team leader positions and the additional permanent CEM positions

(6) The Committee is asked to approve this revised structure and note that the additional funding required (approximately £125k including on-costs in 2010/11), will be funded on a one-off basis this year and will form part of the Medium Term Plan for future years. A revised proposed team structure is set out at **Appendix 2**. A draft Job Description for the team leader posts is shown at **Appendix 3**.

### **Consultation with the Localism Team**

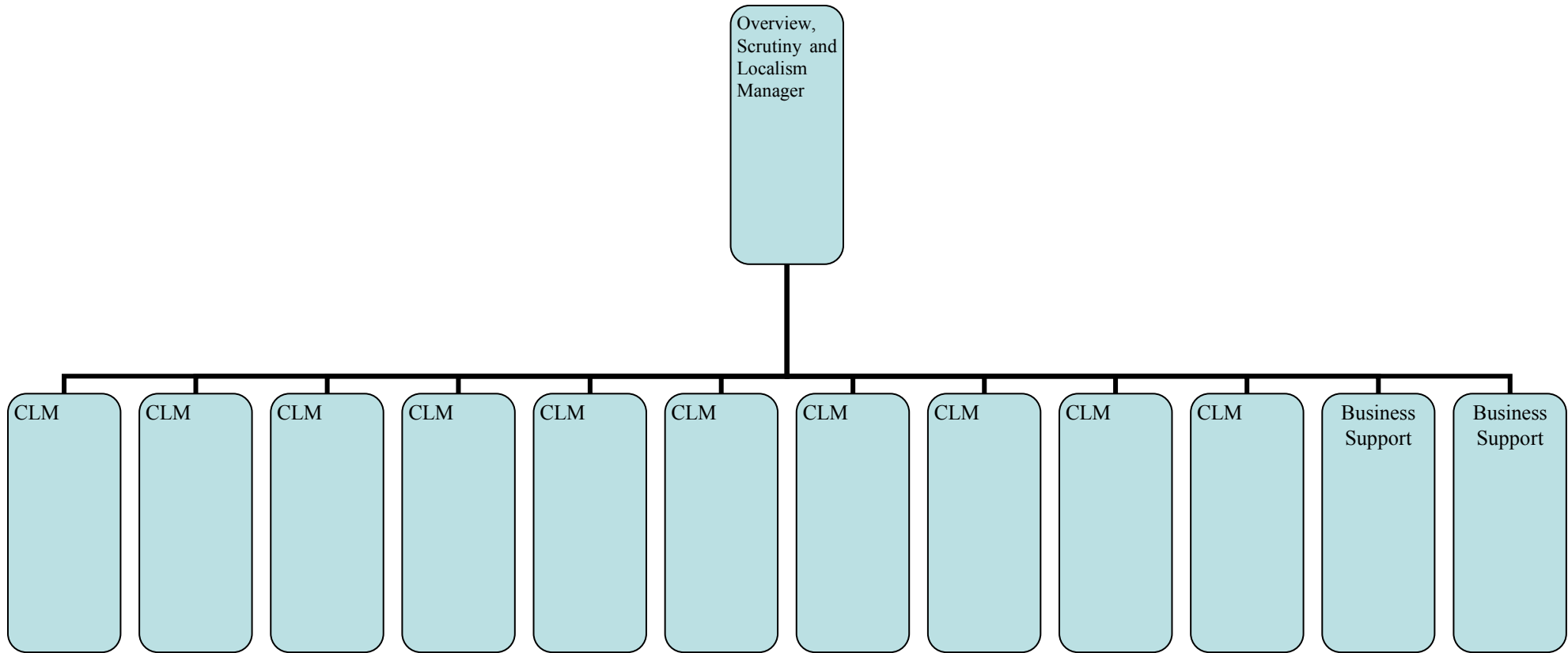
(7) Three consultation meetings have taken place during March with the CLMs. All staff have had ample opportunity to express their views on the proposals. The unanimous view is that the additional resources for the team and the clear message of support for the work of the team is hugely welcomed and the team is committed to ensure that the new structure is a success. A further meeting with the team will take place very shortly involving the Head of Democratic Services & Local Leadership and the Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager to discuss and agree the division of responsibilities between the unit managers, the team leaders and team members.

#### **Recommendation:**

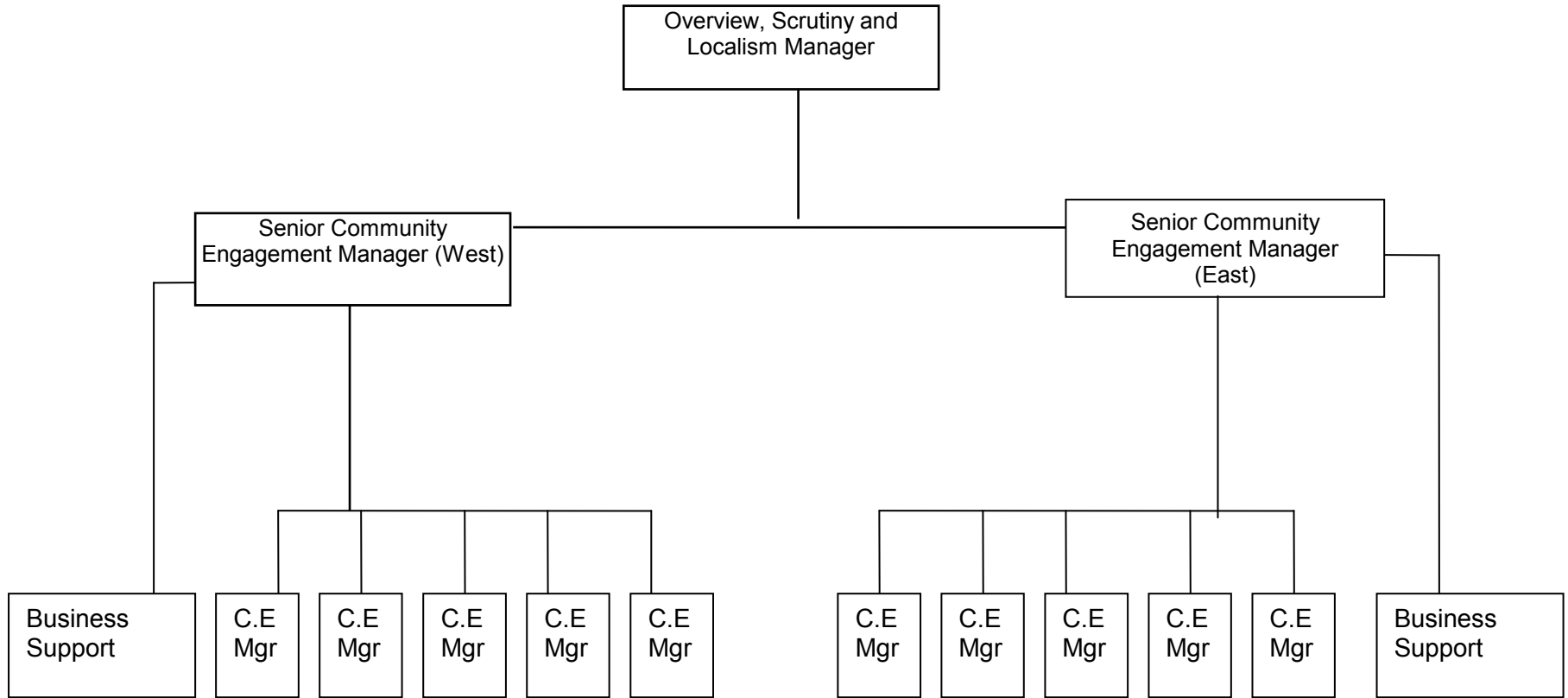
That the Committee approves the proposed restructuring of the Community Liaison Manager Team as described above and that authority be delegated to the Head of Democratic Services & Local Leadership to finalise the job descriptions for the team leader posts and undertake the recruitment exercise.

Paul Wickenden, Overview Scrutiny and Localism Manager  
Tel No: 01622 694486  
e-mail: paul.wickenden@kent.gov.uk

Background Information: None



# LOCALISM



**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT**

**LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**JOB TITLE:** Senior Community Engagement Manager

**GRADE:** KS12 (subject to evaluation)

**RESPONSIBLE TO:** Overview Scrutiny and Localism Manager

**JOB PURPOSE**

Lead a group of Community Engagement Managers in the delivery of the County Council's community engagement activity and carry out the role of a Community Engagement Manager in relation to a specific District.

The Community Engagement Managers are the principal contacts for co-ordinating the County Council's community engagement activities in the area(s) they are allocated.

The Community Engagement Managers will act as a conduit for the County Council (but will not speak or make decisions on the County Council's behalf) e.g. Local Strategic Partnerships, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, etc.

**ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

As Team Leader:

1. Direct, manage and motivate the work of a team of Community Engagement Managers and Business Support staff to ensure an effective service is maintained.
2. Manage relevant budgets to ensure effective use of financial resources and compliance with financial regulations.
3. Provide expert professional advice to senior managers, Members and the Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager to ensure the collaboration, with Partners, on the development of a range of models/methods of community engagement to meet the emerging agenda of citizen engagement.
4. Deputise, as required, for the Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager to ensure continuity of service.
5. Build and ensure the maintenance of effective and sustainable networks of local contacts and relationships with key partners (public, private and voluntary sectors) to develop effective methods of community engagement to respond to the needs of the community.
6. Lead and direct, along with Partners, the development of a range of communication tools, including use of new technology to develop a range of innovative ways in which communities can be empowered helping communities wherever possible to take ownership and responsibility in providing the solutions for the services a community demands.

7. Lead, in liaison with the Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager, the Council's response to the empowerment agenda, e.g. the duty to involve; and to be responsible for overview and scrutiny of issues at a locality level.
  
- 8 Direct and manage effective partnership working to ensure that every opportunity is given to individuals and organisations within a locality to access those funds which are available for allocation to worthy projects within the Community. Allocation of these funds (subject to the appropriate approvals) will be distributed either through the schemes already developed for the elected Members or through the community(ies) deciding the priorities.

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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

Requirements		
<p>Qualifications</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Honours degree or equivalent</li> <li>2. A post-graduate degree or equivalent</li> <li>3. Substantial experience in Local Government or service-related private sector organisation</li> <li>4. A management qualification</li> </ol>	Any two of these are required	
<p>Demonstrable understanding of the potential conflicts that can arise between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• competing service priorities in a locality</li> <li>• corporate needs and front-line service pressures</li> </ul> <p>and an ability to manage these pressures to achieve a desired outcome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough understanding of the strategic and political context of KCC and Partners</li> </ul>	E	
<p>Substantial experience of and a proven track record of working effectively with the public, elected councillors and Senior Officers in service delivery or policy development. Preferably in a similar role of community engagement)</p>	E	
<p>Experience in application of professional knowledge combined with personal skills in achieving specific objectives</p>	E	
<p>Experience of working in partnership with other organisations to deliver agreed objectives</p>	E	
<p>Relevant experience of local government in Kent or of the relationships and interactions within a two tier local government structure</p>	E	
<p>High-level interpersonal and communication skills; experience of using tact and sensitivity in demanding situations</p>	E	
<p>Experience of successful Budget and project management</p>	E	

Management experience	E	
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