

**By:** Rob Semens, Directorate Personnel Manager, CFE

**To:** Personnel Committee

**Date:** 12 May 2010

**Subject:** Children Families and Education Directorate's Restructure

**Classification:** **Unrestricted**

---

**SUMMARY:** The Children Families and Education Directorate are currently in the process of restructuring in order to transform services and reduce costs. This paper sets out the main challenges and processes involved.

---

## **BACKGROUND**

1. The new Managing Director for CFE joined KCC in May 2009 and immediately started work on a process to improve services to children young people and families, and also to address an underlying budget deficit.

A paper to a full County Council meeting in June 2009 set out broad proposals for change, and a specific proposal for a new CFE Senior Management Team, was agreed.

Identifying suitable candidates for the new posts of Director of Learning, Director of Specialist Children's Services took some time, and this delayed the process for the wider re-structure of CFE, but informal consultation with managers and trade unions started in December 2009 and formal consultation on 23 February 2010.

We aim to have as much of the new staffing structure as possible implemented by 1 September 2010.

2. The consultation is a 90 day process because of the number of proposed redundancies, and the proposals (still under consultation until 24 May) are radical in some respects:
  - a) A change from 23 current Local Children's Services Partnerships to 12 new Local Children's Trust Partnerships based on District Council boundaries to support the Kent Children's Trust.
  - b) A significant reduction in curriculum support for schools and a new focus on School Improvement Partner support.
  - c) Changed accountability for locally based services to ensure consistency and flexibility across the county.
  - d) Creation of a team to support commissioning and partnerships.
  - e) Changes in management arrangements for corporate parenting support and services for disabled children.
  - f) A rationalisation of Early Years structures.

- g) Net reduction of 260 posts (100 of these were frozen vacancies).
3. The key challenge across the wide range of services in CFE is to ensure that we retain talented staff needed to deliver future services, and fulfil our legal responsibility to minimise the impact on staff, especially in terms of compulsory redundancy.

To achieve this we have:-

- a) A 'slotting' process to confirm people in post where there is little change, to provide certainty where possible.
  - b) Made it clear to staff in proposed 'deleted' posts that we expect them to apply for new posts in the CFE structure.
  - c) A limited and managed process for voluntary redundancy; so that we can retain the skills of good staff by allowing them to replace someone that we can afford to lose.
  - d) Issued temporary contracts for many appointments over the past six months so that we can re-advertise the posts to redeployees in May/June.
  - e) Agreed to advertise posts internally, and only to do so externally by exception.
4. Kent County Council and CFE have established over the last 18 months from surveys of staff that a key improvement area is in the management of change.

A number of actions have therefore been agreed:-

- a) We decided from the outset to ensure that information was communicated to staff by their line managers; while this left scope for some inconsistency this has helped engage managers better than before.
- b) We have provided managers with development opportunities through corporate KCC programmes both to equip themselves for changes ahead, but also to support their staff.
- c) Access for staff to workshops on CV writing/Interview preparation, becoming self employed.
- d) Provided regular bulletins on the restructure from the Managing Director, and also Frequently Asked Question pages regularly updated.
- e) We have engaged Headteachers in specific briefing sessions so that they have every opportunity to understand and challenge our proposals, and can discuss them with CFE staff who visit their schools.

5. Changing the staffing structures is only the starting point in the transformation of services, and the CFE Change Programme includes other important actions including:-
- a) Review of accommodation needs, both locally and centrally.
  - b) Work with partner agencies on Kent Children's Trust, to reinforce partnership working for improved outcome, especially locally and to use the Children and Young People's Plan to support integrated working.
  - c) A workforce development strategy to drive forward the change programme.
  - d) A review of the relationship with schools.
  - e) A preventative strategy to engage all agencies so that resources to support vulnerable groups can be effectively deployed.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Members of the Personnel Committee are asked to note the purpose and impact of the proposed CFE re-structure, the challenges presented and the HR strategies to address these, both for the re-structure process and for the important change programme beyond this.

**Rob Semens**  
**Directorate Personnel Manager**  
**Children Families and Education**  
**Ext 4064**