

Strategic Leadership Restructure

Summary: This report sets out a proposed strategic leadership restructure to better enable the Council to meet the priorities set out in its new Corporate Plan and the ambitions of Members following the District Council elections in May last year.

It is proposed that the Corporate Director roles are deleted and replaced with a single Chief Executive.

This report seeks authority to move forwards with a formal consultation with the Corporate Directors.

Conclusions: A proposed restructure of the strategic leadership is recommended to ensure the Council is well placed to deliver on its Corporate Plan priorities agreed by the Council.

That the single Chief Executive model represents the most effective one for the Council in delivering those priorities and is put forward as the basis for consultation and that formal consultation commences with affected employees (Corporate Directors and Heads of Paid Service).

That following formal consultation, the matter should be reconsidered by Cabinet and any financial implications arising from the agreement of a proposed restructure are reported at that point if necessary.

Recommendations:

1. To refer the proposed model to the Employment and Appeals Committee (EAC) on 7th January 2020 for consideration and onward reporting to Council on 15th January 2020.
2. To recommend to Council on 15th January 2020 to receive the Cabinet's preferred model for consultation and delegate to the EAC any consequential employment matters arising from any restructuring process, following the consultation and a subsequent Cabinet decision to the EAC.
3. To commence formal consultation with the affected post holders subject to the view of the Employment and Appeals Committee and Council.

Reasons for the Recommendations: There is now an imperative to review the strategic leadership structure, to ensure that it is aligned to deliver and achieve the ambitions that Members have set out in the new Corporate Plan. The Council needs to ensure its senior leadership structure has the right roles and skills in place to deliver on the Council's objectives.

1. Introduction

This report sets out a proposed senior leadership restructure to better enable the Council to meet the priorities set out in its new Corporate Plan and the ambitions of Members following the District Council elections in May last year.

The current strategic leadership structure, consisting of two Corporate Directors, was adopted by Council on 16 November 2016.

2. Council Priorities

Preferred Model:

Shortly after assuming control of the hung Council in late 2018, the Leader was made aware that the current structure of the organisation was a concern for the Local Government Association, subsequent advice recommended reversion to a one Head of Paid Service model.

Since taking control of the Council in May 2019, the ability of the Council to deliver a new strategic direction and to better engage with our residents and communities has been a key concern of the Cabinet.

Consequently the Administration has been reviewing the appropriateness of the current structure to deliver the new corporate plan, particularly in light of Cabinet's views about how well the current arrangements are operating, the Investors in People Assessment in spring 2019 and the Capability Review report.

To support the Cabinet in this process the Leader sought HR advice from the Local Government Association and external legal advice.

The LGA advice is that they are only aware of one other Council currently operating the same model as NNDC. Some other Councils have used variations of the model but many are now reverting back to more familiar Chief Executive models due to some of the challenges posed with the 'twin headed' approach.

There is now an imperative to review the strategic leadership structure, to ensure that it is aligned to the achievement of the ambitions that Members have set out and the Council has the right roles and skills in place to deliver on the Council's objectives.

On 7th October 2019 the Cabinet indicated their support in reviewing the strategic leadership of the Council and exploring moving to a new model to be able to be better able to deliver the priorities for the Council.

Following informal preliminary discussions with the current Corporate Directors, Cabinet considers that the one Chief Executive model is the most appropriate model and are now minded to engage in formal consultation with the affected post holders and Unison.

3. Next Steps

The next stage in the process, is to put the preferred model forward for formal consultation with the post holders affected and Unison and to convene the Employment and Appeals Committee following resolution by Council to deal with any consequential employment matters.

That following formal consultation, the matter is reported to Cabinet to decide whether to implement the proposals, together with the financial implications of any decision.

There are no financial implications at this stage as the Council is merely moving forward with a consultation process. If, following consultation, the proposed model is adopted, any financial Implications will be reported at that stage.

4. Recommendations

1. To refer the proposed model to the Employment and Appeals Committee (EAC) on 7th January 2020 for consideration and onward reporting to Council on 15th January 2020.
2. To recommend to Council on 15th January 2020 to receive the Cabinet's preferred model for consultation and delegate to the EAC any consequential employment matters arising from any restructuring process, following the consultation and a subsequent Cabinet decision to the EAC.
3. To commence formal consultation with the affected postholders subject to the view of the Employment and Appeals Committee and Council.

5. Implications and Risks

As this is a consultation exercise no significant risks have been identified.

6. Financial Implications and Risks

There are no financial implications in moving to formal consultation on the proposed new structure at this stage. If the proposed structure is approved following consultation then a full financial assessment will be made and reported to Cabinet and Council (if necessary).

7. Sustainability

None

8. Equality and Diversity

None identified.

9. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

None