

Senior Management Restructure

Recommendations:

Full Council is asked to:-

- **Note the revised senior management structure detailed in the report so as to meet the needs of the organisation moving forward in terms of improved service delivery, delivering the headline objectives of the Corporate Plan, responding to the ongoing COVID situation and engaging with partners in respect to the anticipated White Paper on Devolution;**
- **Agree an increase in the budget for the senior management structure of up to £57,000 per annum from 1st November 2020, initially to be paid for from the Invest to Save Reserve and then incorporated into the 2021/22 base budget**
- **Nominate members to serve on the Appointment Panel to support the Director level appointments in to the new structure**

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Following the Full Council elections in May 2019 the incoming administration commissioned a review of the Council's organisational capacity and capability to deliver their manifesto pledges. This concluded that the Council needed to achieve "a rapid step change in the style and drive of corporate leadership".

Subsequently, the Council agreed to re-create the post of Chief Executive (confirmed at its meeting of the 24th June 2020) and detailed consideration has since been given to how the style, culture, capacity and resilience of the senior management structure can be changed and strengthened to meet the administration's ambitions for the authority over the period to at least 2023.

The context in which the Council has operated since the Capability Review was undertaken has changed significantly over the past year. Over the past six months the Council's focus has needed to be on responding to, and more recently supporting recovery from, the COVID pandemic. This has meant that the focus of the organisation has been on partnership activity to protect and support our communities and businesses rather than seeking to deliver on the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and objectives.

Looking forward there remains considerable uncertainty, but the expectation that the virus would "come back" during the autumn / winter period seems to be being realised, and the economic impact of the virus on the wider economy, including here in North Norfolk, is expected to be significant requiring ongoing focus of the Council. At the same time, the Government is to publish a White Paper later this month on Devolution which will inevitably require detailed appraisal and consideration with the potential of renewed debate in Norfolk about local government reorganisation if we are to realise the benefits of increased financial resources and powers for the County from Government through some form of "Devolution Deal".

Notwithstanding this context, the Council's Cabinet wishes to see delivery of its Corporate Plan

objectives and has begun to review and prioritise its ambitions in the short (next nine months) and medium terms (next two years). Concerns in this regard have been raised that the Council might seek to do too many things at once and doesn't have a good track record of delivery / completion of projects and proposals – essentially that we try to do too many things at once such that we don't do many things in a timely manner or particularly “well”. The Council therefore needs to do fewer things better, with a keen focus on delivery and completion both at an officer and Cabinet (member) level. Reflection has also been given to whether the existing senior management arrangements have the capacity to deliver the political vision for the district as a team of seven.

Whilst there is no standard or “right” model for the management of a district or borough council, recognising that each place or community is unique and faces different challenges, service demands, geographical, economic and demographic context – the management models of many similar local authorities to North Norfolk have been reviewed and a model proposed which it is believed would serve the District well over the next few years in meeting the expectations and political vision of the current administration.

The model proposes a new senior management structure which seeks to increase the strategic and service delivery capacity of the organisation through more clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of senior managers within the Council.

The model proposes separating leadership and management responsibilities through a new Corporate Leadership Team and Operational Management Team as outlined in the attached presentation.

The model has been the subject of consultation over the period 10th August to 9th September 2020, during which time a number of small changes have been proposed and agreed reflecting the line management and reporting arrangements for a small number of teams / functions. The fundamental model of a Chief Executive and small Executive Core of corporate support functions; together with three Directors / Directorates, supported by six Assistant Director posts, is however now proposed for adoption moving forward.

This will increase the senior management capacity of the organisation by moving from a recent senior management structure of 8 posts - 2 Corporate Directors and Joint Heads of Paid Service and 6 Heads of Service; to 10 posts – 1 Chief Executive, 3 Directors and 6 Assistant Directors thereby strengthening organisational capacity and resilience.

The model now proposed for adoption has a maximum first year cost of £881,000 (inclusive of on-costs at 28.3%); which means for the period 1st November 2020 - 31st March 2021 an increase in the current salary budget of £18,864 which it is proposed is financed through the Invest to Save Reserve. Thereafter, the base budget for senior management salaries will need to be increased by £57,000 in the base budget from April 2021 and this will be factored in to the setting of the 2021/22 budget. Full Council is therefore asked to approve these additional costs for the current financial year and to the base budget being increased in future years to reflect the cost of the new management model moving forward.

Council is also asked to nominate members to serve on the Appointment Panel for the Director (Chief Officer) appointments. Appointments to the Panel will be made according to political representation on the Council – ie 3 Liberal Democrats, 1 Conservative, 1 Independent.