



Date: 16 December 2014

Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

To: All Members of Council

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(other recipients for information)

Dear Councillor,

Please see overleaf a Supplementary Agenda for the meeting of the **COUNCIL** on **TUESDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2014** at **6.30 pm**.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Owen'.

Rebecca Owen
Democratic Services Officer

COUNCIL - 16 DECEMBER 2014

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

7. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITION STATEMENT (Pages 1 - 2)

To receive the Leader of the Council's Position Statement.

12. CORPORATE DIRECTION STRUCTURE (Pages 3 - 12)

Report of the Chief Executive.

Attached are amended recommendations, an amended structure and a document which outlines management's response to Unison's comments.

Position Statement of Leader of Council - 16 December 2014

Mr Mayor, fellow Councillors, officers, members of the public and media

As this is the last Council of the year, I wanted briefly to look back, as well as forwards. Whilst 2014 has been a difficult year for the Council, as with many others across the country, we have achieved a great deal.

Work on the Crescent development is well underway, as you have all seen in the last few weeks, and by this time next year, Sainsbury's will be trading locally (their Investment Board has confirmed) and Cineworld and other shops, cafes and restaurants will be bringing people and vibrancy to the whole town, not just that area. This will be a just reward for the faith this Administration put into Tin Hat, Sainsbury's and Cineworld. Many people, including some in this Chamber, said it wouldn't happen - it is and it will!

Work has started in earnest also on the new Leisure Centre on Argents Mead. The preparation was not without its difficulties, but again the Administration formed an excellent partnership with Places for People and Pellikaan, resulting in a design and facilities of which the Borough will be proud when the centre opens in early 2016. We were able to facilitate a time capsule being buried by pupils of Saint Mary's school last Monday to mark a milestone in the project. We will be seeing steel work erected by the end of February.

Work has also started on the new squash Club which this Council has facilitated and, by doing so, has ensured that Hinckley Squash and Rackets Club continue the very long and successful history of providing squash facilities for the people of Hinckley. Also, by our intervention, we have enabled the facilities to be enhanced to provide 4 high quality squash courts.

Mr Mayor, these flagship developments, long-awaited and involving difficult decisions, which have been taken in the long-term interests of the people who live in our Borough.

We have led also on the work on the A5. Again, this road has been a problem for a long time and the work now being undertaken will open up that significant artery for our local economy for the future. We welcome the recent announcement in the Autumn Statement over the commitment to dual the section between Dodwells Island and Longshoot This has been, and will continue to be, a major partnership with other authorities along the A5 and again we can be proud of our taking the lead in getting something done. We will continue with our efforts to secure even more investment for the extended dualing between the M69 and M42.

All this has been actioned against a background of reducing funding from central government - and the County Council - and increasing demand for our services. Despite that, we continue to maintain a balanced budget for 2015/16, a Medium Term Financial Strategy which is the envy of many of our neighbours (and beyond) and services which perform to high levels of quality and efficiency. I am sure that you will all join me in thanking our award-winning management and staff for for such a splendid achievement.

We continue to struggle in the face of a draconian planning regime, in which the views of local people seem to carry little, if any, weight and where there is an unfair bias in favour of development and land supply. I am pleased that recent judgements by the Secretary of State (unusually) have put the Council in the relatively positive position of having a supply covering 5.25 years - for now, at least! Last Friday morning Cllr Crooks and I attended the RTPi's centenary event at Loughborough University and I put these points to the local MP and Secretary of State for Education, Nicky Morgan, who promised to put these back to Eric Pickles

Last Friday also Cllr Bill and the Chief Executive attended a meeting of the Councils which are members of the Coventry/Warwickshire City Deal; Members will know that we are members of that Deal, as well as the one covering Leicester and Leicestershire. Whilst the meeting did not reach any firm conclusion, it was very constructive and considered all potential structural options to optimise our joint economic future. This included exploration of economic prosperity boards and combined authorities. All were in agreement that any decision about future arrangements will only be made once all implications and benefits to their councils, businesses and residents are fully explored and understood. It was agreed that a further meeting would be arranged early in the new year to continue these discussions.

I am pleased to announce that we have secured £694,000 of Transformation Bid funding for our ICT partnership with Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, Blaby District Council and Melton Borough Council. This funding will enable further centralisation of ICT functions here at these offices and for implementing channel shift, so that users of our services are served even more efficiently and effectively than they are at present.

I am pleased to confirm this Council's achievement in receiving yet another award. This has been for our flagship Atkins Cultural Quarter Regeneration Project for which we have been given Green World Ambassador status for securing a coveted Green Apple award at a recent House of Commons ceremony.

Finally, on a very positive note, I am sure that you will all join me in congratulating Jill Stidever from Markfield, who followed up her BBC East Midlands award for 'Get Inspired Unsung Hero' by being presented with the National award at the BBC Sports Personality of the Year Awards for 2014 on Sunday evening. Jill has spent nearly 60 years supporting people with Special Needs through swimming. This is the second time in three years a coach from this Borough has won the national award – a tremendous achievement for both of them and for their supporter, Graeme Chilvers; himself very much an 'unsung hero!'

Mr Mayor, we do have a number of items to consider and decide tonight, more than is usual for the pre-Christmas Council, but it shows the amount of work we have to undertake.

We have achieved a great deal, just in one year, let alone in those which preceded it, and this will pave the way for a brighter future for our communities. So, I can truly wish everyone a Merry Christmas, in the knowledge that, for the people of Hinckley and Bosworth, it will be a happy New Year.

Councillor Stuart Bray
Leader of the Council
16 December 2014

Agenda Item 12

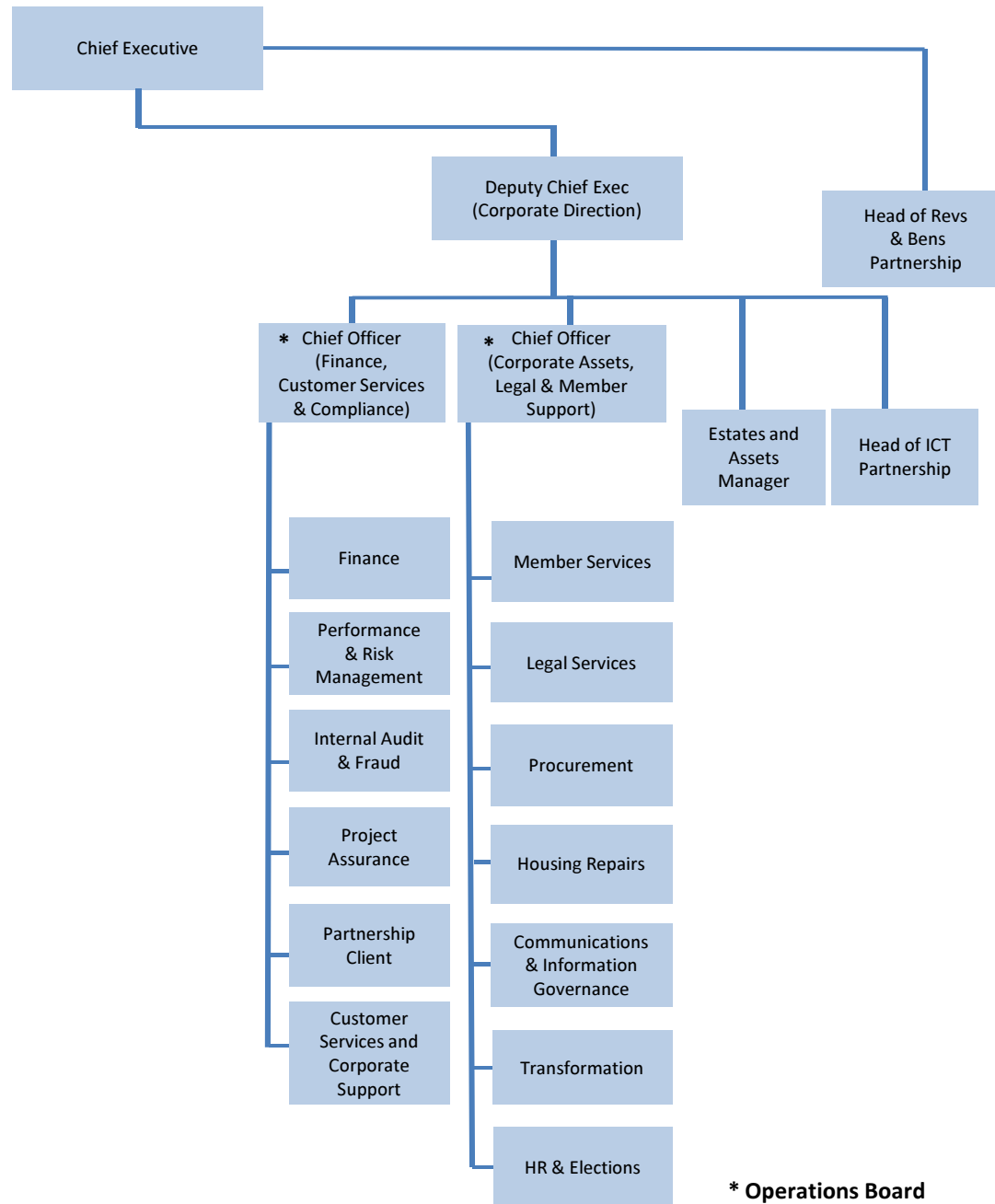
Council - 16 December 2014

2. AMENDED RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

- i) Supports the principles and objectives of the restructure.
- ii) Notes that the existing arrangement of two Chief Officers will remain accountable to the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Direction).
- iii) Delegates decisions on the final detail of the structure, job descriptions and gradings, to the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Direction).
- iv) Abides by the Constitution in relation to the formal appointment to the post.

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Consultation response to the proposed changes to the Corporate Direction Restructure

BACKGROUND

The Council proposes to restructure in accordance with a proposal as laid before Council for approval. In essence, following the resignation of a Chief Officer, it is proposed to appoint internally, with reorganisation of responsibilities between two Chief Officer posts to save £50k to £60k pa by not recruiting externally. The reorganisation also creates some newly defined responsibilities. There are interim arrangements in place covering all the responsible areas of the departed Chief Officer.

It was agreed that Unison would conduct a consultation of all staff in the immediately affected areas (Finance and all services previously under the departed Chief Officer). Extensive responses have been received from both Unison members and non-members and these have been incorporated in the summary below under generic headings –information of a personal nature is excluded.

Comments/responses from Steve Atkinson are in blue against each question below.

1 THE NEED FOR REORGANISATION

It is widely understood by staff from previous discussions with senior management that a significant reorganisation is to be expected some time after May 2015 and in that context the responses are:

- Why reorganise now when there is to be a later reorganisation?
- Why reorganise now when the interim arrangements are working very well?

This can be summarised as questioning the need and urgency.

Having reflected carefully and discussed the position at SLB, I have concluded that there is no pressing need for changes, other than those proposed, to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the vacancy. This does not preclude further changes at a later date, but these need not be immediately after May 2015. For this reason, the proposed changes should be implemented as soon as possible, subject to this consultation.

2. THE PROPOSED STRUCTURE

There are numerous questions arising about individual responsibilities or Corporate responsibilities under the new structure for both Statutory or internally designated tasks but as these do not directly question the proposal they will be subject of a separate consultation report to the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Direction).

There are numerous comments about whether the proposed structure is appropriate and some in full agreement. Alternatives have been suggested.

- The key response is regarding the sense in putting the front line service of Customer Services under a Finance function. It is however agreed that the majority of customer enquiry with Customer Services relates to issues of Revenues and Benefits. In further discussion around this point it is now understood the logic is explained as achieving closeness to the Client function of Revenues and Benefits. It is also understood that the Universal Credit implementation will need close working between the two services.

I welcome this understanding, which accords with the rationale of the proposal.

- There is significant concern at the loss of Legal expertise (from the departed Chief Officer who was a qualified solicitor), which supported a number of functions, as neither Chief Officer is required to have such knowledge.

That is the case. However, we do have a Legal Services Manager, who is qualified and provides excellent legal advice and who is supported by other qualified practitioners. This team, supported as necessary by other ad hoc appointments to meet specific requirements, will provide the required advice to senior managers.

- There is concern that (like the London Borough of Barnet) the Council would be open to criticism by appointing a Monitoring officer with no legal qualification.

There is no formal requirement for this role to be performed by a qualified legal officer. Indeed, I am aware of other District Councils which have Monitoring Officers, who have no legal qualifications, and which operate effectively in that basis. I think that Barnet is a specific case, which has a wider context.

- Why is Procurement being separated from Finance?

Procurement is still part of the remit of Corporate Services and has been separate from the main finance team for some time. This function was retained by Julie Kenny, when she was appointed as a Chief Officer

- Why isn't Housing Repairs under Housing?

As above, the Housing Repairs function has been separate from the Housing Management function for over four years. It enables a clear separation between the client and the contractor.

- Why are Estates and I.T. not reporting to a Chief Officer?

They have both reported to the Deputy Chief Executive (formerly Director of Finance and ICT) for some time. There is no need to change this arrangement; hence none is proposed.

- Why isn't Customer Services with Housing repairs as there is considerable synergy because of customer requirements?

The rationale for Customer Services being aligned managerially with Revenues and Benefits has been explained above.

- One Chief Officer should cover Compliance, Legal Services and Information Governance.

I would be interested in the rationale behind this suggestion, which could create a management imbalance – something I have always wished to avoid at this level..

- There is no mention of the Corporate Support team but by subsequent enquiry it is understood this would move to the existing Chief Officer post.

That was the substance of the proposal submitted for consultation, which I confirmed to you on 7 December. However, Sanjiv Kohli has met today with Lynn Fray and her colleagues and has agreed with their submission that the corporate support function should be aligned with the Customer Services team, within the remit of the vacant Chief Officer post. This variation to the structure, therefore, will be highlighted, when it is put to the Council on 16 December.

- With the ongoing project for 'channel shift' it would make more sense for Customer Services to be with Transformation.

This is another suggestion (the third) for a different location for Customer Services; highlighting the difficulty in securing the most appropriate arrangement. In the end, the proposed location, aligned to the Revenues and Benefits function, is considered to be the best fit, because of the increasingly close business relationship we have identified between the two functions over the last three years.

3. THE PROPOSED NEW RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE NEW CHIEF OFFICER POST

There is no direct feedback on the new proposal for a Chief Officer post to have specific responsibility for:

- Project Assurance or
- Client Role in Partnerships

It is understood there is an intention being drawn up to flesh out the Fraud element to potentially create a new service once the existing Fraud service within Revenues and Benefits has transferred (under Government direction) to the Single Fraud Investigation Service. There is no direct feedback on that proposal.

Noted.

In general, Unison supports these proposals to better manage the business of the Council.

In addition, a number of suggestions have been made that some former responsibilities of the departed Chief Officer would now fall on junior staff and so potentially jobs need to be re-evaluated and that might impact on savings.

If that is the case, we will review in accordance with appropriate Job Evaluation process.

4. THE NEED FOR A NEW CHIEF OFFICER POST

This covers two aspects:

A. DOES THE ORGANISATION NEED A REPLACEMENT CHIEF OFFICER

There is considerable feedback to question that the Council needs to retain the existing large structure at both Corporate and Strategic level and it is suggested the matter should be examined in the expected wider reorganisation.

Under this heading there is also reiteration that the interim arrangements are working well.

I agree that these arrangements have worked very well, but we need to put arrangements on a sustainable, longer-term footing.

B. IS THE PROPOSED NEW POST OF SUFFICIENT SUBSTANCE TO BE CHIEF OFFICER LEVEL

It is understood that the Job Evaluation for Chief Officers is conducted under the Hay methodology which amongst other things places some weight on responsibility for budgets and resources, including staff.

- Responses have questioned whether the new post manages sufficient staff as some of the functions in the new structure are reiteration of responsibilities in the job description but without staffing. It was questioned whether staffing from Revenues and Benefits was included but it is now understood that this is not the case.

Noted - but, as you know, Hay covers much more than 'people' management.

- The budget responsibilities of the various existing and new posts have been examined and the budget responsibility for the new post is set out at a suitably substantive level.

Noted.

5. RECRUITMENT TO THE NEW CHIEF OFFICER POST

- There is considerable feedback on the way the new post is defined in such a way that it possibly eliminates the majority of people who ordinarily might enter the selection process. The difficult point is the requirement for Accountancy qualifications and it is questioned why in particular that has to now move to Chief Officer level from the Head of Finance post when it could remain with the Head of Finance. If the Head of Finance is selected for the post then they take that responsibility with them as it is quite usual for Chief Officers to continue with former roles.
- Responses have pointed out that the last Chief Officer recruitment included two applicants having a 6m trial before final selection
- Unison requests that in line with Council policies and procedures that a new post is recruited using the usual open and transparent process.

It will be recruited and selected in the most appropriate manner, in accordance with our established practices and procedures and with the current Constitution. I have no problem with there being a three month trial period, to enable the appointee and SLB to determine long-term suitability.

Robert Vaughan
Joint Branch Secretary
Unison Hinckley and Bosworth Branch
9th December 2014

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