

Rother District Council

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 28 June 2021

Title: Council Restructure

Report of: Chief Executive

Cabinet Member: Councillor Oliver

Ward(s): All

Purpose of Report: To inform Members of changes to the Senior Officer structure to best meet the needs of the Corporate Plan and to seek approval for changes to the statutory posts of Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer.

Decision Type: Non-Key

Officer

Recommendation(s): **Recommendation to COUNCIL:** That at the appropriate time in the implementation of the new officer structure, the Chief Finance Officer role be reassigned to the post of Finance Manager and the Monitoring Officer role be reassigned to the post of Deputy Chief Executive.

AND

It be **RESOLVED:** That the Leader of the Council in consultation with Group Leaders agree the five Members to serve on the Interview Panel for the posts of Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Place/Climate.

Introduction

1. Members will be aware that the new Corporate Plan is nearing adoption following an extensive period of consultation. It was always envisaged that in response to the new Corporate Plan, that the officer structure and allocation of resources would need to change to ensure sufficient organisational focus is maintained on delivering the ambitions of the current administration. This report sets out the broad proposals for the new structure and seeks approval for the reassignment of the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer roles. The report also includes the timetable to deliver a new structure. This report concerns the initial phase of the restructure concerning the senior management structure.

What the new structure needs to achieve

2. In considering the future shape of the Council and associated staffing structure, it is important to reflect on what is expected to be achieved over the life of the Corporate Plan and beyond. It will be essential that Members and the Chief Executive provide the strategic lead in the new structure. Two key themes are also clear from the Corporate Plan, firstly shaping the district to deliver improvements in the environmental, economic and social environment that

Rother residents, businesses and visitors enjoy. Secondly enabling the Council to transform through an efficient and empowered workforce placing the “customer” at the centre of all we do.

3. Although staffing matters are normally dealt with by the Licensing and General Purposes Committee, reorganisation of this nature and also involving the statutory posts of Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, requires approval of full Council. The restructure will take place in two phases, firstly the restructure of the senior management team (Chief Officers) and secondly the departmental structure.

New Structure

4. To support the two key themes described above, it is proposed to create two new posts, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Place/Climate. The Deputy Chief Executive post will focus on the transformational change of the Council to be more efficient and customer centric organisation. This post will also carry the statutory role of Monitoring Officer. The change in Monitoring Officer has been consulted on and agreed with the Democratic Services Manager who currently holds this role under a special responsibility arrangement. The Director of Place/Climate will focus on the climate emergency and the place shaping ambitions of the Corporate Plan.
5. The Assistant Director, Resources post is to be deleted from the new structure. This post currently holds the statutory position of Chief Finance Officer and it is proposed that this be reassigned to the Council’s Finance Manager. In addition, to ensure the two new posts are affordable, there will also be a reduction of two existing Heads of Service Posts. This process will inevitably lead to redundancies at the current Head of Service level. The Council’s employment stability policy will be applied throughout this process.
6. The draft senior officer and departmental structure has been the subject of staff and union consultation, which at the time of writing, is still live. A verbal update will be given to Members on the outcome of the consultation. The draft Chief Officer and departmental structure is shown at Appendix A.

Next Steps and Timescale

7. As the post of Director of Place/Climate will be initially ring fenced internally, recruitment can commence as soon as the consultation is complete. Members are asked to recommend to Council the changes to the two statutory posts as detailed in this report. Assuming approval is given by Council, then recruitment to the Deputy Chief Executive role can commence immediately following that approval. The appointment process to both posts will require the establishment of a Member Panel to undertake the interviews, with the support of the Chief Executive. It is suggested that five Members are appointed to the Panel, made up of representation from all the political parties/groupings on the Council. Cabinet may wish to consider whether the same Member Panel should interview for both roles or whether two separate Panels are established. It is proposed that the Leader of the Council agrees the Members for the Panel(s) with the appropriate Group Leaders.
8. Once the two new posts have been appointed to, then the departmental structure will be finalised to support the new corporate management team in meeting the needs of the Corporate Plan. Further consultation will be carried out with staff and unions as appropriate.

9. It is envisaged that the full implementation of the new structure will take in the order of six months to complete including the necessary staff and union consultation. This suggests that the final restructure should be in place by January 2022. An outline of the timetable is shown at Appendix B.

Financial Implications

10. Members are very aware of the Council's financial position and the need to make significant on-going savings. Consequently, it is proposed that any restructure needs to be broadly cost neutral in terms of on-going staffing costs. However, it should be recognised that there may be one-off costs that will need to be met from reserves in order to deliver the new structure. Whilst the restructure will need to be cost neutral, it is likely that there will be a redirection of staffing resources to meet the needs of the Corporate Plan. This may by necessity involve redundancies in order to release resources to enable this to happen.

Conclusion

11. The restructure has been designed to allow the Council to focus on delivery of the Corporate Plan, along with its climate change ambitions while also concentrating on customer focus and efficiency.

Environmental

12. As stated above, one of the key aims of this Council is to maintain a clear focus on the clearly stated carbon reduction ambitions. This proposed restructuring, along with the remainder of the process, will allow clarity of focus.

Consultation

13. Full consultation has been carried out with the relevant officers and is still live. As stated above, an update will be given at the meeting on the final outcome. Consultation on the further stages of the restructuring are on-going.

Risk Management

14. There are risks associated with a restructuring approach, but these are mitigated by adhering to the Council's already agreed employment policies and practices.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	Yes
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	Yes	Exempt from publication	No

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Appendices:	Appendix A – Structure Chart Appendix B – Timetable
Relevant Previous Minutes:	
Background Papers:	-
Reference Documents:	-

Chief Executive

Director of Place and Climate Emergency

Planning Policy and Strategy	Planning DM/Building Control contract	Regen and Major projects / estates	Neigh'hood/ Commercial Services & Climate Emergency
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Chief Executive's Office

Executive Support, HR & Policy, CFO and Financial Services, Democratic Services & Elections, Communications

Deputy Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer

Revenues and Benefits	Housing and Customer Services	Legal Services Contract	Environmental Services, Licencing and Community Safety	ICT/ Transformation	Internal Audit & risk management
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Staffing Restructure - Timetable

	Action	Start by	Completed by
	<u>Corporate Management and Departmental Structure</u>		
1	Chief Executive design new management structure and high level departmental structure	03-May-21	28-May-21
2	Consultation with staff and UNISON on new management/Departmental structure	24-May-21	21-Jun-21
3	Cabinet notes new senior structure and agrees proposed changes to statutory posts	28-Jun-21	28-Jun-21
4	Full Council approve changes to statutory posts	05-Jul-21	05-Jul-21
5	Relevant staff put under notice of risk of redundancy	05-Jul-21	05-Jul-21
6	Senior Officer interviews	07-Jul-21	16-Jul-21
7	Appointments of Senior Officers	16-Jul-21	30-Jul-21
8	Unsuccessful staff receive redundancy notice	30-Jul-21	30-Jul-21
9	Redundancies of staff unsuccessful	TBC	TBC
	<u>Departmental Restructure</u>		
1	CMT design detailed structures	23-May-21	30-Aug-21
2	Consultation with staff and UNISON on Service structures	07-Jul-21	30-Aug-21
3	Finalise Department structures and financial appraisal	30-Jul-21	13-Sep-21
4	Report to Cabinet or L&GP - might need special L&GP	04-Oct-21	04-Oct-21
5	Relevant staff put under notice of risk of redundancy	05-Oct-21	05-Oct-21
6	Interviews for staff posts	04-Oct-21	12-Nov-21
7	Unsuccessful staff receive redundancy notice	15-Nov-21	15-Nov-21
8	Redundancies of staff unsuccessful	01-Jan-22	01-Jan-22
9	Structure implemented	01-Jan-22	01-Jan-22