

Report to Chief Officers Terms and Conditions Committee

17 March 2023

Subject:	Leadership Team Structure
Director:	Shokat Lal Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Nicki Gobran Interim HR Operations Manager Nicki_Gobran@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to the establishment of a new post of Assistant Chief Executive and to the commencement of recruitment to this post.
- 1.2 That in connection with 1.1 above, approval be given to the salary range for the post of Assistant Chief Executive of £94,000 to £99,000.
- 1.3 That the Chief Executive, in liaison with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to engage with an executive search recruitment consultancy and to advertise and shortlist to the post of Assistant Chief Executive.
- 1.4 That the appointment to the post of Assistant Chief Executive shall be undertaken by the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee in accordance with the Council's Employment Procedure Rules.
- 1.5 That approval be given to the deletion of the post of Director of Business Strategy and Change from the establishment.



2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The organisation is in transition. The Improvement Plan has been developed, the Commissioners have provided two reports to the Secretary of State and the new Chief Executive commenced in post on 6th February 2023. Progress has been made in relation to matters raised through the Grant Thornton, CIPFA and LGA Corporate Peer Challenge reviews. However, the council remains in intervention and progress continues against the Improvement Plan.
- 2.2 The officer Leadership Team currently comprises of the Chief Executive and nine full time Director posts. All nine Directors report directly to the Chief Executive.
- 2.3 Two of these nine Directors have recently resigned from the Council. The Director of Public Health vacancy is currently being filled on an Acting Up basis whilst recruitment to a permanent replacement is underway.
- 2.4 The functions within the Directorate of Business Strategy and Change have been temporarily reassigned, with ICT and Transformation reporting to the Director of Finance; Customer Services reporting to the Director of Regeneration and Growth; and HR, Strategic Improvement (with Communications) reporting to the Chief Executive. This extends the current number of direct reports to the Chief Executive to ten.
- 2.5 Leadership team meetings have been realigned to facilitate more strategic discussion. Away days have been successful, in considering the culture of the organisation and discussing the development of policy issues such as community hubs and a customer service strategy.
- 2.6 Despite these positive initiatives and the huge commitment of all the Leadership Team, with such a large span of control of nine Director posts plus two Assistant Directors/Service Managers, this presents a challenge for the Chief Executive capacity to focus on strategy and strategic intent.



- 2.7 There is a need to review the span of control for the Chief Executive which is too many for effective integrated conversation relating to the whole organisation. There is also a need to develop greater senior leadership resilience other than the Chief Executive, particularly when considering an 'outward focus' for the council.
- 2.8 An immediate action for the Chief Executive is to build strategic capacity and streamline the current span of control through the realignment of functions previously held within the Directorate of Business Strategy and Change.
- 2.9 Proposals to realign, build or redirect senior officer capacity will be brought forward to this Committee in due course.

3 Proposals

3.1 Assistant Chief Executive

The council has a number of cross cutting priorities that require corporate oversight and grip. These include customer services, an improvement plan which is embedded, organisational development, a new performance management framework, developing some clear principles and a model around hybrid working, and designing a new neighbourhood working model.

- 3.1.1 The strategy and policy function is crucial to sustainable improvement and strategy development needs to mature into council wide approaches and policies, for example, to tackle poverty, to respond to decarbonisation, and to develop an inclusive Sandwell economy. This function currently sits in Business Strategy and Change, operating largely at a transactional level. The Assistant Chief Executive will be responsible for taking forward major cross-cutting projects and programmes, including Customer Journey and Thriving Neighbourhoods priorities. It is proposed that HR Services should sit with the Assistant Chief Executive, given the central role of HR and Organisation Development in driving and enabling the culture change which sits at the heart of the council's improvement plan. Similarly, it is proposed that corporate leadership of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will move to this Directorate.



3.1.2 It is important for the Chief Executive to have a clear line of sight to these functions, and the role of these services should be a direct strategic delivery vehicle for the Chief Executive.

3.1.3 This new post will subsume functions previously held within the Directorate of Business Strategy and Change. It is proposed to delete this post and that the remaining functions should remain in their temporarily assigned places or otherwise reassigned temporarily pending a wider review of Leadership Team structure.

3.2 Salary

3.2.1 A job evaluation and salary benchmarking exercise has been undertaken with West Midlands Employers for this new post. The post will be on Joint Negotiating Committee terms and conditions for Chief Officers. The proposed salary range is set out below, subject to any future pay awards from 2024:

3.2.2 Assistant Chief Executive salary range £94,000 to £99,000

- Point 1 = £94,000
- Point 2 = £95,500
- Point 3 = £99,000

3.2.3 As a point of comparison, the current Assistant Director salary range is £79,387 to £90,482 and the Director annual salary range is £98,443 to £114,478

3.4 Budget implications

The new post of Assistant Chief Executive will be fully funded through the deletion of the post of Director of Business Strategy and Change.

3.5 Process and timescales

The new post of Assistant Chief Executive will be advertised externally, although internal applicants are welcome to apply. Expert external recruitment consultancy support will be engaged for this campaign. Appointment will be made by the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee in accordance with the Council's Employment Procedure



Rules. It is anticipated that the post will be advertised around Easter time, with final interviews concluded by June.

4 Implications

Resources:	Any additional costs arising from the creation of any new posts will be met through the deletion of the posts of Director of Business Strategy and Change, and the redirection of budget set against previous post of Deputy Chief Executive.
Legal and Governance:	The Council is required to follow relevant Council policies and procedures for these appointments.
Equality:	The recommendations contained within this report have not identified any issues which would discriminate against any disadvantaged or vulnerable persons.
Health and Wellbeing:	There are no specific health and wellbeing implications arising from the contents of this report.
Social Value	There are no specific social value implications arising from the contents of this report.

5 Appendices

None

6 Background Papers

None

