

Minutes of Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee

17 March 2023 at 2.30pm
in Committee Room 1, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present: Councillor Carmichael (Chair);
Councillors Bhullar, E M Giles, Padda and Rollins.

Also present: Shokat Lal (Chief Executive), Nicki Gobran (Interim HR Operations Manager), Suky Suthi-Nagra (Democratic Services Manager) and John Swann (Democratic Services Officer).

1/23 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dunn and Piper.

2/3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

3/23 **Urgent Business**

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

4/23 **Leadership Team Structure**



The Chief Executive reported that currently, there were nine full time Director posts reporting directly to him. Two of these posts were currently vacant; the Director of Public Health, a statutory role, was being filled on an Acting Up basis whilst recruitment to a permanent replacement was underway and the functions within the Directorate of Business Strategy and Change, had 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 extended the current number of direct reports to the Chief Executive to ten.

As part of the ongoing improvements and to enable more strategic discussion, consideration of the culture of the organisation and discussing the development of policy issues such as community hubs and a customer service strategy, due to the large span of control of nine Director posts plus two Assistant Directors/Service Managers, this presented a challenge for the Chief Executive's capacity to focus on strategy and strategic intent.

It was therefore proposed 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. It was proposed to delete the role of Director of Business Strategy and Change and create a role of Assistant Chief Executive who would be responsible for taking forward major cross-cutting projects and programmes, including Customer Journey and Thriving Neighbourhoods priorities. HR Services would sit with the Assistant Chief Executive, given the central role of HR and Organisation Development in driving and enabling the culture change which sat at the heart of the council's improvement plan. Corporate leadership of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion would also move to this Directorate. Responsibility for Transformation would continue to sit with the Director of Finance.

In accordance with a job evaluation and salary benchmarking exercise with West Midlands Employers, the proposed salary range was set out, subject to any future pay awards from 2024:

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

The new post of Assistant Chief Executive would be advertised externally as well as internally and appointment to the role would be made by the Chief Officer Terms and Conditions Committee in accordance with the Council's Employment Procedure Rules.

A review of the current Leadership structure to realign, build or redirect senior officer capacity would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee in due course.

In response to queries from the Committee, the Chief Executive confirmed that:-

- the post would not have a statutory responsibility as most Directors currently do nor would it have the same number of staff reporting to it as other Directorates;
- the Assistant Chief Executive salary was above that of the current Assistant Director salary range but below that of a Director annual salary range;
- the priorities for the postholder would help to deliver the priorities of the Improvement Plan and performance against this would be measured.

Resolved:-

- (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;
- (2) that in connection with Resolution (1) above, approval be given to the salary range for the post of Assistant Chief Executive of £94,000 to £99,000;
- (3) that the Chief Executive, in liaison with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to agree the job description for the role, to engage with an executive search recruitment consultancy and to advertise and shortlist to the post of Assistant Chief Executive;

- (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.
- (5) that approval be given to the deletion of the post of Director of Business Strategy and Change from the establishment.

Meeting ended at 2.44 pm

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