

3 July 2014**Agenda Item: 10****REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH****ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO SUPPORT THE PUBLIC
HEALTH BUSINESS FUNCTION****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report provides information on the business function required to support the work of the Public Health Department. It seeks approval from the Public Health Committee to establish an executive officer to support the work of the Director of Public Health and his department.

Information and Advice

2. Prior to April this year, the Public Health department received much of its business support through the centralised functions within the Primary Care Trusts. Following the transfer to Nottinghamshire County Council; the Public Health department had to set up an internal mechanism for business support as no central function was available.
3. Over the course of the year, the function has been partially undertaken by the Administrative manager with support from a Public Health Manager. However staff departure and changes to roles have left much of the workload unallocated.
4. As the majority of staff within the department undertake specialist Public Health duties, there has been little staff resource available to support the general business management. Over time, the pressures associated with the day to day duties have expanded as the department becomes more integrated into Council systems and processes.
5. The pressure falls predominantly to the Associate Director of Public Health, who in response is diverted from their strategic duties to ensure routine operational tasks are maintained. Other Council Departments have executive officers that support the Corporate Directors and general business of the departments.
6. Whilst a review of business support is currently underway across the Council, it has been suggested that this will not be able to provide the required support to Public Health in the near future.

7. A recent internal audit report highlighted some gaps in the internal business management of the department. These have been addressed in the short term. However, the Associate Director of Public Health has identified further gaps that are likely to cause risks for the department over the longer term. As the situation has been ongoing since April, many of the competing work pressures are becoming critical and an urgent solution needs to be found.

Establishing an Executive Officer for Public Health

8. The Executive Officer will perform the following core roles:
- Undertake financial monitoring for corporate budget codes and maintain oversight of the full budget
 - Support the development of strategic plans for the Public Health department across Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City
 - Support the resolution of contract management and financial issues
 - Provide business support through writing of reports, responding to correspondence and requests for information from elected members, members of the public and senior officers.
 - Maintain an effective communications process, across the senior management team, within the department and across the Councils
 - Maintain oversight of human resource and pay issues, including monitoring of emerging HR policy and changes to terms and conditions.
 - Lead on the risk, safety and emergency planning for the department
 - Lead of the development of a workforce plan that recognises the range of professionals and general skills of the Department, and the relationship with external partners
 - Maintain a system to ensure mandatory training and processes are in place for the department
9. The Public Health department is mindful of the financial pressures facing the council. It has therefore wishes to look creatively at solutions to meet the needs of the department, whilst addressing integration of Public Health within the council, providing security for council staff and minimising financial impact to the council.
10. It is proposed to recruit an executive officer for a 2 year fixed term period. The opportunity will be opened to internal council staff that have the necessary skills and experience. This will offer future employment opportunities to staff 'at risk' as a result of the current budget challenge.

Financial Implications

11. There is no new resource required to formally establish the executive officer post. At transfer, Public Health established a transition fund for the sole use of establishing the necessary infrastructure to support the Public Health function. In addition, the Public Health grant also includes an element to cover overheads. The establishment of an executive officer is a legitimate call on both these funds.

12. The grade has been evaluated as Band D. The costs associated with establishing the post at top of the scale will be £40,254 per year. NB: The salary costs are also subject to on-costs relating to employers national insurance contributions and employers pension contributions.

Other options considered

13. An enquiry was made to confirm whether the emerging business support project could provide the business manager support for the Public Health Department. The scope of the business support project currently only covers the adult and children departments. Although this will be rolled out, it is uncertain whether the scope of the project will meet the current needs of the Department.
14. On investigation, the scope of the project covers mainly the roles undertaken by administration staff. The broader business development role is likely to still be required within each Department. Therefore, this option was rejected as it would not meet the needs of the Public Health department in the near future.

Reason for recommendation

15. The role of an executive officer is in line with arrangements within other departments. It will provide the necessary support to the Director of Public Health and Associate Director of Public Health to ensure the operational business management is undertaken for the department.

Statutory and Policy Implications

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, the NHS constitution (together with any statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State) and sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

17. Human Resources Implications

Human Resource implications are contained in the body of the report.

18. Finance Implications

Finance implications are contained in the body of the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Public Health Committee is asked to:

1. Support the establishment of the post of an Executive Officer, Band D scp 42 – 47 (£35,784 - £40,254) for Public Health.
2. Agree to the re-assignment of funds from within the Public Health grant and Public Health transition fund to cover the costs of the post.

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Constitutional Comments (SG 12/06/2014)

19. The proposals in this report fall within the remit of this Committee. The Employment Procedure Rules provide that the report to Committee include the required advice and HR comments and that the recognised trade unions be consulted on all proposed changes to staffing structures (and any views given should be fully considered prior to a decision being made).

Financial Comments (KAS 11/06/14)

20. The financial implications are contained within paragraphs 11 and 12 of the report.

Background Papers

Public Health Subcommittee paper on the Public Health Grant January 2013

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

