

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR CUSTOMERS AND HR

THE BUSINESS SUPPORT REVIEW PROGRAMME

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval for the revised Business Support Service structure (see Appendix A) effective from 1st April 2018, to deliver further savings as set out below.

Information

2. Corporate Leadership Team have agreed to create a Corporate Business Support Service which identifies and integrates business support resources across the Authority, to deliver savings, efficiencies and consistency of approach through an agreed programme of work.
3. The Business Support Review is an established ongoing programme which seeks to review and re-design processes and develop new operating models for service support within a modern organisation. The original project has a cashable efficiency target of £3.2 million to be delivered by 1st April 2018.

Savings

4. In addition to the above savings and in light of the financial challenges facing the Local Authority a further Option for Change (OFC) proposal has been submitted which identifies an additional £918k saving by 2020.

Legacy and future savings proposals can be found in the following table:

Opening Budget;	£ 11,107,237	
Financial Year	FTE	Savings
2013/14	548	
2014/15	475	£911,000 Savings Delivered
2015/16	440	£895,000 Savings Delivered
2016/17*	435	£534,000 Savings Delivered
2017/18*	434.5	£508,000 Savings Delivered
2018/19	406	£415,000 Previously Agreed £300,000 New OFC Target
2019/20		£300,000 New OFC Target
2020/21		£318,000 New OFC Target

*it should be noted that 2016/17 and 2017/18 net staffing numbers remained broadly the same, due to the assimilation of Public Health and Corporate Leadership Business Support teams into the wider Business Support Service.

Overall savings from the Business Support Service, delivered by the end of 2021 will be £4,181m.

Delivery of savings:

5. There are a number of different projects and programmes of work in place which will collectively deliver required cashable savings and efficiencies:

Re-structure and the creation of Business Support Hubs

6. Departments continue to review the way in which they provide front line services to the citizens of Nottinghamshire in order to deliver cashable and qualitative efficiencies and their business support requirements have changed significantly as a result.
7. Changes in operational support requirements and new ways of working, provides an opportunity for the provision of elements of business support to be delivered at 'arms-length'. Whilst recognising that 'one size does not fit all' there are significant areas of commonality across services in terms of their support needs i.e. data input and transactional activity.
8. The proposed restructure exploits these commonalities and where appropriate brings staff together into centralised multidisciplinary teams. Co-locating staff where possible into Business Support Hubs also enables the service to review managerial arrangements and spans of control.

The Purchase to Pay (P2P) Hub Project

9. For the last two years the service has been working closely with colleagues from both the Business Support Centre and Corporate Procurement to streamline performance in relation to the ordering of goods, invoice processing and payment.
10. As a part of this project, two "Purchase to Pay" Hubs have been created, which provide an expert point of contact for dealing with requisitioning requirements on behalf of operational teams across Bassetlaw, Broxtowe, Gedling, Ashfield, Newark, Sherwood and Mansfield. Consolidating this activity has enabled the Council to reduce the number of staff involved in end to end purchase to pay processes and has improved the quality of service provided by business support colleagues supporting front line workers.

The Meeting Support Service Hub Project

11. The service has been reviewing the way in which support to officer meetings across the Authority is delivered, with a view to moving away from the reliance or expectation that an administrator will attend to take notes of actions or in some cases more comprehensive minutes.
12. Emerging new technologies and the example set within other public and private sector industries, has led to a project which is exploring the opportunity to securely share information and move toward digital audio recording and cloud storage of the record of the meeting.

13. Gradual transition toward greater self-sufficiency of meeting chairs is enabling the service to review and reduce the amount of administrators dedicated to this area of work.

Summary

14. The savings delivered to date as a result of the Council's continual review of business support activity have been achieved without the need for compulsory redundancy and any further reductions required will continue to be achieved by a combination of deletion of existing vacancies and if required, voluntary redundancy.
15. The service has also been able to realign some budgetary income sources which more appropriately reflects the activity completed on behalf of front line services, this has generated additional income (which has been offset against the savings target).
16. Business support staff have been consulted with regard to the revised structure appended and there have been no concerns or comments received.
17. In respect of the savings required from 2019/20 onwards it is the Council's intention to bring a further report to Personnel Committee during the Autumn of 2018.

Statutory and Policy Implications

18. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

19. As set out within the table under section 4 and within the HR implications below, the deletion of 28.5 posts alongside some additional income, will enable the service to deliver the required savings of £715,000 by 1st April 2018.

Human Resources Implications

20. The net impact of the efficiency measures described are illustrated within the table under section 4 of the report.
More specifically, actual post reductions are as follows;
- 1 fte Team Manager
 - 4.5 fte Business Support Officers
 - 1.5 fte Grade 4 Business Support Administrators
 - 16.5 fte Grade 3 Business Support Administrators
 - 5 fte Grade 2 Business Support Administrators
21. As set out in paragraph 14 above. Reductions will be achieved by either the deletion of vacancies or voluntary redundancy.

22. It should be noted that there are more requests for voluntary redundancy than needed to achieve the required post reductions at this time. As such each request will be considered in accordance with agreed Nottinghamshire County Council policies and procedures.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That Members approve the revised Business Support Structure as set out in Appendix A.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (GR 11.01.18)

23. The recommendation contained within the report is a matter which falls to this Committee to consider in accordance with the County Councils Constitution and the scheme of delegation to the Personnel Committee.

Financial Comments (SES 12.01.18)

24. The financial implications are set out in the report.

HR Comments (JP 17.1.18)

25. Consultation has taken place with business support staff and with the recognised Trade Unions.
26. Trades Union colleagues have commented that the savings being made from the Business Support Service are significant. Trades Union colleagues note that to date the majority of savings have been made through effective vacancy management and are keen to see this approach continue. They do however, recognise that it may be necessary to consider voluntary redundancies as the savings programme continues and accept that the proposals reflect the most efficient way of delivering savings.
27. The redundancies noted within the report will be achieved in accordance with the County Council's agreed employment policies and procedures.

Background Papers and Published Documents

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All