

2 May 2018**Agenda Item: 10****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES****REVIEW OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES STAFFING STRUCTURE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To review the revised staffing structure for Democratic Services and to propose amendments to better meet current and future demand.

Information and Advice

2. The existing staffing structure for Democratic Services was agreed by Governance & Ethics Committee in July 2017 (see Appendix 1) with a staffing establishment of 14.5 full time equivalent (FTE) posts.
3. In approving the structure, the Committee also agreed that a review should be undertaken after six months of implementation to ensure the revised structure was robust and fit for purpose.
4. The revised structure has proven largely successful, although a number of refinements are proposed to ensure that the business of the Council can be conducted with optimum efficiency and to enable the most appropriate support to Councillors.

Proposed Changes

It is proposed that:-

- a. The existing PA to the Leader post is disestablished and replaced with an Executive Officer post. This new post will serve as a conduit between the ruling group and the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and the role's remit will largely reflect the Executive Officer roles which serve Corporate Directors currently. It is proposed that this post reports directly to the Team Manager, Democratic Services.
- b. The existing PA to the Main Opposition Group's Leader be reconfigured as an Executive Assistant post to reflect similar roles which serve CLT currently.
- c. The existing 2 FTE Member Support Officer posts within the ruling group be replaced with a FTE PA to Committee Chairs post and a 0.5 FTE Member Support Officer post. This is to ensure a more consistent and appropriate level of support to Committee Chairs, whilst still retaining relevant support for backbenchers within the ruling group.

- d. The existing Research and Civic Support post be reduced from 1 FTE to 0.8 FTE, with the post's remit refocused to provide civic support to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in terms of diary management and their attendance at external events and research support to the Mansfield Independent Forum Group in recognition of their increased role in the governance of the Council. In light of the civic support aspects of this role it is proposed that this post should report directly to the Team Manager, Democratic Services.
 - e. A new Education Appeals Manager post be established within the Governance Team. As described in the report to Governance and Ethics Committee in July 2017, a new approach to administering the education appeals has been piloted, establishing a pool of external clerks who can be used on an ad hoc basis as a flexible resource to meet seasonal and other peak demand. This has so far proven very successful but, as indicated in the previous report, has resulted in further management demands in fully embedding and developing this approach further. It is felt that the establishment of this new Education Appeals Manager post will also enable the team to develop its offer to Academies wishing to buy into this service (the existing arrangements have meant that it has not been possible to meet all recent requests from Academies and it is hoped that this new post will enable the team to be more proactive in generating further income in the future).
 - f. Attempts have been made to progress the proposed Legal and Democratic Services Apprentice post via the national Association of Democratic Services Officers. Initial attempts have proven largely unsuccessful with not enough Councils sharing the County Council's interest at this stage in developing such a post within the Government's recognised list of apprenticeships via the Trailblazers arrangements. It is hoped that such a post might be established nationally in the long run but at this stage it is proposed to remove it from the structure.
 - g. The titles of the various Member Support posts be revised to enable more generic roles to be described across the different opposition groups. Job Descriptions have been updated to better reflect the current roles and to formalise and clarify the potential changes in grade and remit following elections. These draft job descriptions will be subject to further consultation with the postholders.
 - h. At this stage it is not proposed that a permanent business support post be established within the Governance Team although it should be noted that the plan to share the Legal Services business support resource has proven unworkable at times due to continuing levels of business support demands in Legal Services conflicting with seasonal peaks of demand in Democratic Services related to Education Appeals. In light of the seasonal peaks around the education appeals work, it is proposed that temporary support continue to be procured when required. The Nottingham Trent University student placement has again proven successful in this, its second year of operation. Further discussions are planned to ensure that the timing of this placement best reflects the business need.
5. The proposed revised staffing structure is attached at Appendix 2. The proposed revised staffing establishment for Democratic Services is 13.8 FTE posts with provision for an additional flexible resource budget to meet seasonal and peak demand, particularly relating to education admission appeals.

Other Options Considered

6. To retain the existing structure but this would not enable the outcomes of this agreed review to be implemented to ensure the structure remains fit for purpose.

Reason for Recommendation

7. The proposed revised structure will ensure that Democratic Services can continue to:
 - be appropriately staffed;
 - respond to the needs of the revised committee structure;
 - better respond to the changing landscape, available technological advances and the need to undertake business in different ways;
 - seek to maintain, where demand continues, its offer to external bodies, including the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, various academies for education appeals and other councils in relation to supporting the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel and the City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Joint Economic Prosperity Committee.

Statutory and Policy Implications

8. 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

9. If the existing structure was fully staffed (including the apprenticeship post), the staffing costs including salary, NI and pensions contributions would be £542,140 a year (based on the most recent monthly costs). This does not include the additional contingency resource relating to education appeals which is likely to be in the region of £45-50,000 over the course of a full year (costs continue to be monitored in that respect and the estimate is based on the initial six months of operating this approach).
10. The proposed structure would incur staffing costs of £586,036 and this calculation is based on the following draft indicative grades, subject to formal job evaluation where required:-
 - i. Executive Officer to the Leader – Band D
 - ii. Research and Civic Support Officer – Grade 5
 - iii. Executive Assistant to the Opposition Group – Grade 5
 - iv. Education Appeals Manager – Band B

N.B. the PA to Committee Chairs post has been evaluated at Grade 4.

11. A contingency allocation of up to £73,894 will be sought from the Finance and Major Contracts Management Committee. This includes the costs of the difference between the existing and the proposed structure and £30,000 towards the additional resource relating to education appeals as outlined above in paragraph 9 (the remaining £15- £20,000 of the cost of the additional resource will be covered from within the existing Democratic Services budget).

Human Resources Implications

12. The Human Resources implications are set out in the body of the report.

Trade Union Consultations

13. These draft proposals will be shared with the trade unions and further discussions will be held as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That the revised staffing structure for Democratic Services, attached at Appendix 2, be approved.
- 2) That the revised staffing structure be reviewed after twelve months to ensure business needs are being appropriately met, with a report submitted to the Committee if that review determines that further changes are required.
- 3) To make a request to the Finance and Major Contracts Management Committee to approve a contingency allocation of £73,894.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact:
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Constitutional Comments (SLB 23/04/2018)

14. The proposals within this report are within the remit of the Governance and Ethics Committee.

Financial Comments (SES 24/04/18)

15. The financial implications are set out in the report

Human Resources Comments (GME 23/04/2018)

16. The revised structure and new posts will be evaluated and, where necessary, recruited to in accordance with the agreed employment procedures of the Council.

Background Papers and Published Documents

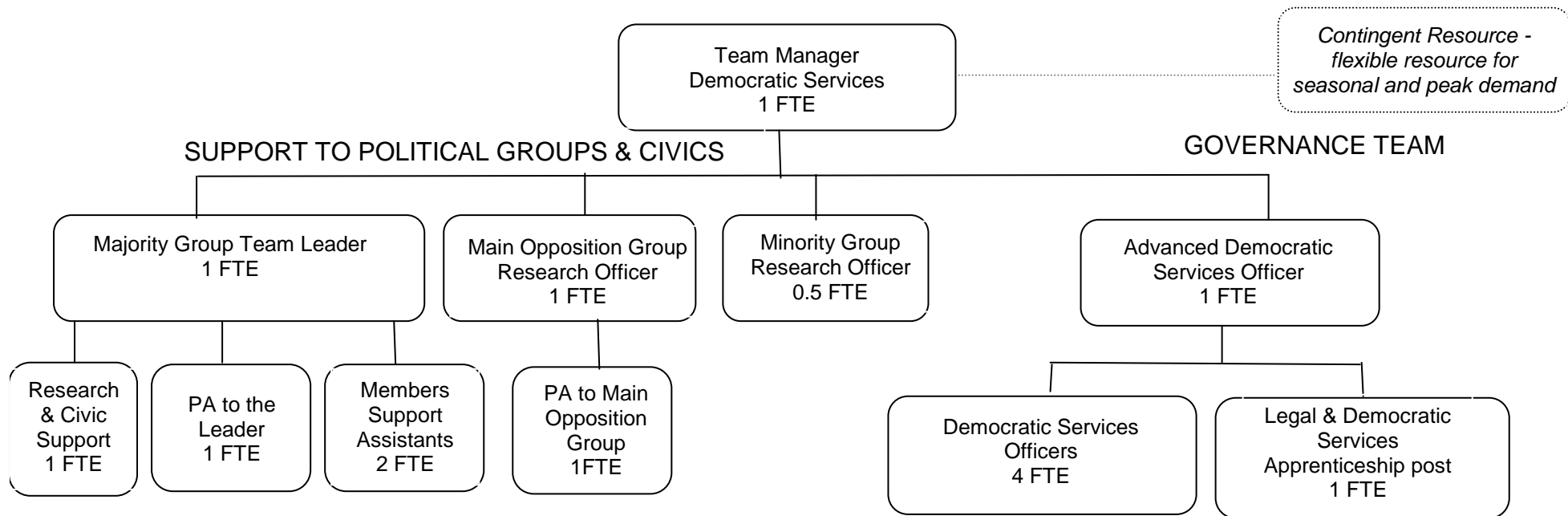
Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Report to Governance and Ethics Committee – 19 July 2017 and minutes of that meeting.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All

APPENDIX 1 - EXISTING STRUCTURE CHART



APPENDIX 2 – PROPOSED STRUCTURE CHART

