

## **REPORT OF THE LEADER**

### **CHANGES TO LEGAL SERVICES STAFFING STRUCTURE**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To approve a revised staffing structure for Legal Services to reflect the necessary changes to implement the savings proposed in the outline business case presented to Policy Committee on 13th November 2013.

#### **Information and Advice**

2. Members are aware of the proposal and the reasons for it from the Policy Committee report of 13th November.
3. A copy of the proposed new structure is attached to this report at Appendix 1. Staff and the Trades Unions have been consulted on the proposed structure in accordance with the employment procedures rules.
4. It should be noted that the part of the structure relating to business support staff (marked with an asterisk and dotted line on the chart headed Corporate and Environmental Law) is currently subject to ongoing consultation and a review of business support arrangements across Policy Planning and Corporate Services Department and therefore staffing proposals for this aspect of the proposed structure will be brought back to a later Committee meeting for a decision.

#### **Other Options Considered**

5. It would be possible to continue to place significant numbers of legal cases with external providers although this will not achieve the savings identified by the outline business case.

#### **Reason for Recommendation**

6. To ensure that the majority of legal work on core legal services such as child protection work is carried out cost effectively by the in-house legal team.

#### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults,

service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working 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**

8. The cost of the new posts will be met by savings made by reducing the staffing establishment in other areas of Legal Services where demand has reduced or where efficiencies have been possible. Therefore there will be a net nil effect on the overall number of staff in the establishment This, together with other budget savings proposed by the outline business case and by retaining child protection work in-house, we aim to secure total savings of £666K by 2017 .

### **Human Resources Implications**

9. Recruitment to the posts will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's current recruitment and selection codes of practice. In order to ensure the necessary caliber of the candidates the posts will be permanent and in accordance with the vacancy control measures will be open to application by suitable redeployees with the appropriate skills and aptitudes.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty implications**

10. Public Authorities are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not and to foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not. Decision makers must understand the effect of policies and practices on people with protected characteristics. Equality Impact Assessments are the mechanism by which the authority considers these effects.
11. Equality implications have been considered during the development of the proposals and it is not believed that the proposals will have a disproportionate, adverse or negative effect on people with protected characteristics. The Human Resources policies that will be applied to any staffing reductions have been the subject of Equality Impact Assessments.
12. It is essential that Members give due regards to the implications for protected groups in the context of their equality duty in relation to their decisions.

### **Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Implications**

13. The extension of the existing in-house child protection legal team will support the work of the child protection teams working in Children, Families and Cultural Services department to safeguard the most vulnerable children in society.

### **Ways of Working Implications**

14. As there is a net nil effect on the total staffing establishment there will be no long term impact on ways of working proposals.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the revised staffing structure for Legal Services attached at Appendix 1 be approved excluding the business support roles which will be the subject of a further report at a later date. The existing structure is at Appendix 2.

**Councillor Alan Rhodes**  
**Leader of the Council**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**  
Heather Dickinson, Group Manager, Legal and Democratic Services

### **Constitutional Comments (SSR 20/12/13)**

15. Policy Committee has the authority to agree the recommendation within the report.

### **Financial Comments (NR 23/12/13)**

16. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 8 of the report

### **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.

- Staffing Structure
- OBC A61

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All