

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**STAFFING STRUCTURE FOR COMPLAINTS AND INFORMATION TEAM****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the staffing structure for the Complaints and Information Team which is part of the Policy Planning and Corporate Services Department.

Background

2. Policy Committee considered and approved a proposal to centralise the Council's information management functions on 12th November 2014. The proposal recognised the need to improve and develop some areas of information management work, particularly in the light of increased scrutiny from the Information Commissioner, and that this would be best achieved by centralising information management within the Complaints and Information Team (C&IT).
3. Included in the proposal was the access to records work (Subject Access Requests) which are a statutory requirement under Data Protection Act. This work is mainly in relation to social care records. There has been pilot project in C&IT to manage and appropriately redact the records in respect of Subject Access Requests relating to children's social care. The pilot made use of new systems in that all requests are prepared and redacted electronically using specialist software. The records are also provided to requesters in an electronic format.

Complaints and Information Team

4. It is proposed that the Complaints and Information Team will continue to manage the complaints functions and the Council's responses to Freedom of Information Act requests. In addition it will agree and deliver a programme of work in relation to information governance and management improvements ensure a consistent approach to data breach reporting, investigation and accountability; progress work on implementation of the Transparency Code and on improving the Publication Scheme. It would also mean that all Subject Access Request work would become the responsibility of the team. The transfer of the appropriate budget has been agreed.

5. The proposed new team structure is set out in Appendix A and includes a total of 17 fte permanent posts. The post of Information Manager (Band D) is not new but will transfer into the team from Environment and Resources Department and three additional posts of Complaints Information and Mediation Officers (Band B) are established in the team in order to deal with the Access to Records work. Once the new team is established these posts will be subject to Job Evaluation review. No additional money is required for these posts as the budget has been transferred from other areas of the Council as the work was previously carried out in operational non specialist teams.

Other Options Considered

6. Alternative approaches to information management and governance, including access to records requests and breach reporting, have been considered and tried within the Council. Centralisation of information management will ensure that the Council meets the requirements of government in a more focussed and strategic manner. This centralisation was approved by Policy Committee on 12th November and outlined in Business Case A31.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

7. The proposed structure achieves the rationalisation of the strands of information management and governance work previously carried out in different areas of the Council.

Statutory and Policy Implications

8. 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

9. The proposal moves the post of Information Manager from Environment and Resources into Policy planning and Corporate Services, with no additional financial implications. It also establishes 3 additional Band B Complaints Information and Mediation Officer posts in the Complaints and Information Team, and the appropriate budget will be transferred from children's social care to fund these posts.

Human Resources Implications

10. The proposals have been discussed with the recognised trade unions at departmental JCNP and the newly established posts will be recruited to in line with the vacancy control process.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) Policy Committee notes the expanded role of the Complaints and Information Team.

- 2) The proposed staffing structure for the Complaints and Information Team set out in Appendix A be approved, and the establishment of 3 additional Complaints Information and Mediation Officer posts agreed.

Councillor Alan Rhodes
Leader of the Council

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Jo Kirkby, Team Manager, Complaints and Information Team, Ext 72821

Constitutional Comments ([LM 17/12/14])

11. The Policy Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report'

Financial Comments (SEM 17/12/14)

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

HR Comments (AW 18/12/14)

13. The HR implications are set out in the report

Background Papers and Published Documents

Option for change A31

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

Appendix A
Complaints & Information Team
Proposed Structure January 2015

