

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment and Personnel Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Committee Room 1, The Arc, Clowne, on Wednesday 6th July 2022 at 1400 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Duncan McGregor in the Chair

Councillors Mary Dooley, Sandra Peake and Deborah Watson.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Executive Director of Resources), Jim Fieldsend (Assistant Director and Monitoring Officer), Sara Gordon (Human Resources and OD Manager), Theresa Fletcher (Treasurer), Sandy Williams (Procurement Manager) (to Minute Number EMP32-22/23), Sarah Kay (Planning Manager) (to Minute Number EMP35-22/23), and Alison Bluff (Senior Governance Officer (acting)).

EMP27-22/23. APOLOGIES

An apology was received on behalf of Pam Brown (Assistant Director Leader's Executive, Partnerships, Governance and Communications).

EMP28-22/23. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

EMP29-22/23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

EMP30-22/23. MINUTES – 12th MAY 2022

It was noted that Theresa Fletcher (Treasurer), had been omitted from those present at the meeting.

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Sandra Peake

RESOLVED that subject to the inclusion of the Treasurer being in attendance at the meeting, the Minutes of an Employment and Personnel Committee held on 12th May 2022, be approved as a correct record.

EMP31-22/23. APPRENTICESHIP IN PROCUREMENT

Committee considered a detailed report which sought approval to recommend to Council to add an apprentice position within the Procurement Team.

The Procurement Service was established in 2018 in partnership with North East Derbyshire District Council. The service had grown and provided procurement services

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to a number of local authorities including parish councils which generated an additional income stream that both councils had benefited from.

To maintain the high level of service, build resilience and consider future work force planning, it was proposed to add an apprenticeship position within the team. This would also enable further opportunities to be explored to sell procurement services further.

The cost of an apprentice was circa £10,663 per annum for 16 -18 years old or £15,114 per annum for 18 – 20 years old, and £21,685 per annum for 21 -24 years old. These costs included all on costs.

The recently generated additional income of £2k from selling services to Gedling Borough Council (over and above the original contracted value of £18K), and the new annual income of £20K that the Council received from Amber Valley District Council, plus any Parish Council income, was sufficient to cover the cost of the apprenticeship post.

Members noted that they fully supported apprenticeships.

The Procurement Manager noted that the apprenticeship training period would be for 2 years.

The Human Resources and OD Manager advised Members that the Council advertised apprenticeships as career posts, in schools, colleges and universities and on the 'Job Derbyshire' website.

Moved by Councillor Sandra Peake and seconded by Councillor Mary Dooley
RECOMMENDED that Council approve the addition of a procurement apprentice in the Procurement Team.

(Governance/Head of Paid Service)

The Procurement Manager left the meeting.

EMP32-22/23. SENIOR URBAN DESIGN OFFICER

Committee considered a detailed report which sought approval to recommend to Council an increase in the hours of the current Senior Urban Design Officer post from 0.4FTE to Full Time Equivalent (FTE).

The Senior Urban Design Officer post was a Full Time Equivalent (FTE) post currently shared with Chesterfield Borough Council (CBC). The post holder split his time between CBC - 0.6FTE (3 days) and 0.4FTE (2 days) at Bolsover District Council (BDC). However, CBC had indicated that they wished to dissolve the shared working arrangement and the post holder had also submitted his resignation to both councils. Options had therefore been considered regarding how much urban design resource the Council needed to meet current service requirements and whether there was already an excess in demand for how that resource was used. This had further been considered in the context of the Council's own growth ambitions (and whether the resource could feed into other departmental projects), and also the clear direction of national planning policy set out in the Planning White Paper September 2020 and the recent Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill 2022.

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There was a clear ambition for better design and a greater emphasis on a master plan or design code led policy framework to steer local development, and these remained at the core of the Government's White Paper reforms. Therefore, a dedicated local urban design resource appointed within the Council would place the Council at the forefront of reacting to these changes and delivering these ambitions.

The cost associated with a FTE post holder would be £57,030 per annum, which was an increase of £33,856 against the current established arrangement.

It was recognised that although this would be a growth bid to the establishment, graphs included in the report demonstrated that with the exception of the year impacted upon by coronavirus (2020/21), the Planning Service had consistently exceed the planning fee income budget of £400,000 per annum, and the additional cost required for the new post did not impact significantly on the usual surplus generated by the Service.

The Treasurer noted that if the full time Senior Urban Design Officer post was approved at Council, the cost would be funded from the Council's Planning Fee Reserve as far as possible each year, before being a call on the general fund.

Moved by Councillor Sandra Peake and seconded by Councillor Deborah Watson **RECOMMENDED** that the Council approve an increase in the hours of the current Senior Urban Design Officer post from 0.4FTE to Full Time Equivalent (FTE).

(Governance/Head of Paid Service)

EMP33-22/23. LEGAL SERVICES

Committee considered a detailed report which sought approval to recommend to Council a mini restructure of Legal Services and also to change arrangements with North East Derbyshire District Council for the provision of legal services.

Since 2016 the Legal Services Section had been a shared service of the Strategic Alliance where all costs had been shared equally by Bolsover District Council (BDC) and North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC).

Previous to 2016, BDC had provided legal support to NEDDC under a service level agreement, and prior to that, each council had its own stand-alone legal section.

Under the current arrangement there were two teams in Legal Services each managed by a Team Manager. The Non-Contentious team dealt with all property related matters such as conveyancing, landlord and tenant, planning and contracts. The Contentious team dealt with more litigious matters such as criminal prosecutions, civil litigation, licensing, housing and antisocial behaviour.

A review of the service had taken place which had identified two options.

Option 1 was to retain the status quo and Option 2 was to revert to two separate teams. The cost of each option compared to the current budget for Legal Services was set out in detail in Table 1 to the report, and how Option 2 could work from a BDC perspective was set out in detail in the report.

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Option 2 was considered to be the preferred option and would provide BDC with a Legal Section whose main priority and focus once again would be solely on BDC work. It would, however, enable it to provide external income generating services to other organisations including NEDDC and Rykneld Homes. Staff would be wholly employed by BDC under the same terms and conditions. The Manager would report to one Assistant Director, attend one Service Managers Forum and be the Deputy Monitoring Officer for one authority.

This option also retained a relationship with NEDDC, however, it would be more arm's length with work done via SLAs as opposed to a shared service basis. There would be additional administration in recharging, however, this should be mitigated by the acquisition of case management system. It also ensured that BDC obtained value for money from its Legal Services as work would either be undertaken for BDC or charged out to other organisations on a case by case basis.

In response to a Member's query, the Treasurer confirmed that the difference in cost for Option 2 of £65k, would have to be met from the Business Rate Protection Reserve if there were a gap, to ensure the budget remained balanced for the general fund.

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Sandra Peake **RECOMMENDED** that (1) Council approve the proposed changes to the structure of Legal Services as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report,

(2) that Council continue to undertake legal work for North East Derbyshire District Council through service level agreements.

(Governance/Head of Paid Service)

EMP 34-22/23. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Sandra Peake **RESOLVED** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

The Planning Manager left the meeting.

EMP35-22/23. REVIEW OF THE GOVERNANCE TEAM EXEMPT PARAGRAPHS 1, 2 & 3

Committee considered a detailed report which provided a revised proposal following changes to the Council's Governance Team.

Members would recall the previous Joint Governance Manager bringing a Governance Team restructure proposal to Employment and Personnel Committee in September 2021, where a budget was approved.

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However, following recent senior staffing changes affecting the team, resulting in the appointment of a new Monitoring Officer and losing the Joint Governance Manager and the Solicitor to the Council posts; the Assistant Director Leader's Executive, Partnerships, Governance and Communications now had management responsibilities for the Governance Team. This has resulted in the need to revisit the previous restructuring proposal.

A revised proposed restructure was set out at Appendix A to the report with revised budget implications attached at Appendix B. It was noted that the use of the already agreed budget suggested savings of between £2k and £12k.

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Sandra Peake

RESOLVED that (1) the revised restructure proposal for the operations of the Governance Team be approved,

(2) the use of the already agreed budget and recognised savings included in the budget at Appendix B be approved,

(3) the Assistant Director Leader's Executive, Partnerships, Governance and Communications commence recruitment immediately in line with the proposed changes and restructure model.

(Assistant Director Leader's Executive, Partnerships, Governance and Communications)

The meeting concluded at 3pm.