

## **Report to Cabinet**

**Subject:** Redesign and Restructure of Community Engagement

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012

**Author:** Corporate Director

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

To inform Cabinet of the restructure proposals that have been drafted and consulted on for changing the way that community engagement is delivered by the Council.

To ask Members to note that there is a salary budget shortfall for delivering the new structure but on the basis that any staffing budget shortfall will be met by virement from permanent under spend elsewhere within the Council as the financial year progresses, to allow the Corporate Director to proceed to gain approval for implementation of the new structure from the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1. Formal proposals for changing the way the Council engages with its communities were drawn up in March 2012 as a basis for consultation
- 2.2. On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012 formal 30 days consultation with staff and trade unions commenced on proposals for the redesign and restructuring of the way in which the Council undertakes the community engagement functions.
- 2.3. During the process of drafting proposals it was identified that should the proposals be implemented in full, following formal consultation, that there would be an increased salary cost for the delivery of the new structure of approximately £8000 per annum. Following discussion with the Corporate Director (Chief Financial Officer) it was determined that further efficiencies planned within the Council for the 2012/13 financial year should enable a virement to take place to fund the additional costs of community engagement on a permanent basis, thus containing

costs within the overall budget provision of the Council.

### **3. Proposal**

- 3.1. Detailed proposals of how community engagement might be delivered are detailed in the attached report at Appendix A as a basis for formal consultation with trade unions and employees affected. Formal consultations commenced on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and closed on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2012.
- 3.2. Towards the end of the consultation timetable on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012 the attached report at Appendix A, was presented to the Joint Consultative and Safety Committee (JCSC) along with a written response from UNISON. No other comments were received following the closure of formal consultations.
- 3.3. The Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service, under delegated arrangements, has the authority to determine the final staffing structure to be adopted providing the costs are contained within the budget provision identified.
- 3.4. The Corporate Director has responded in full to issues raised by UNISON and is mindful to recommend to the Chief Executive that the proposals as detailed are implemented in full.
- 3.5. The Chief Financial Officer, at this early stage in the financial year, is unable to identify the exact virement that will enable the additional community engagement staffing costs to be met within the overall budget of the Council. However, the officer is confident that in due course, this virement will be identified and reported to Members.
- 3.6. On the basis that additional staffing costs can be met on a permanent basis, Cabinet are asked to allow the proposals to proceed to the Head of Paid Service for approval for the Corporate Director to implement the structures in full.

### **4. Resource Implications**

- 4.1. The report at Appendix A details the staffing structures proposed to implement the restructure of community engagement functions. At grade maxima, and including additional resource allocation to deliver Communication and Member Services teams, there is an increase in salary costs for delivery of the structure of £7,500. (Detail costs are shown at Appendix B).

- 4.2. As detailed in the reports, every reasonable attempt will be made to retain current employees in suitable work within the Council. Policies to mitigate potential redundancies will be followed by implementing the staffing protocol described in the report. Should this, for any reason, not be possible then redundancy costs will arise with potential pension strain costs.

## **5. Recommendation**

- 5.1. To note the final staffing structures following the review and redesign of the Community Engagement function as detailed.
- 5.2. To acknowledge that the new staffing structure exceeds current staffing budget provision, however, it is considered that this should be contained within the overall budgets of the Council.
- 5.3. To note that it is expected that any potential redundancy costs should be avoided by the redeployment for any staff displaced into suitable alternative roles within the Council.
- 5.4. On the basis that any staffing budget shortfall will be met by virement from permanent under spend elsewhere within the Council as the financial year progresses, to allow the Corporate Director to proceed to gain approval for implementation of the new structure from the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service.