

This Report will be made public on 5 June 2019



Report Number **P/09/03**

**To:** Personnel Committee  
**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019  
**Status:** Non-executive Decision  
**Head of Paid Service:** Dr Susan Priest

**SUBJECT: REPORT OF THE HEAD OF THE PAID SERVICE**

**SUMMARY:** This report is from the Head of the Paid Service in relation to the adequacy of staffing resources across the Council.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**  
Personnel Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**  
1. To receive and note Report P/19/03.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Head of the Paid Service of the council is appointed under s3 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 1.2 The council has a duty under that act to provide the Head of the Paid Service 'with such staff, accommodation and other resources as are, in his opinion, sufficient to allow his duties...to be performed' – s4(1)(b) of the act.
- 1.3 It is therefore appropriate to formally report to the Council, via the Personnel Committee, on the adequacy of staff resources that the Council has provided in order to give assurances that they are sufficient to discharge the Head of Paid Service duties.

## **2. THE STAFFING RESOURCES OF THE COUNCIL**

- 2.1 In February 2018 Cabinet and Council supported the Business Case for transformation and allocated funds to enable a council-wide programme to take place over the course of 18-24 months through to the end of March 2020. As a result of this support, iESE were procured as our partner for delivering the programme and they supported the senior management team through to January 2019. This allowed the Strategy & Analysis phase of the programme to be carried out involving staff wherever possible in the review and redesign of our services. This approach helped to secure engagement and instil a sense of ownership of the future of our Council.
- 2.2 Since then we the Implementation phase has started and the key aspects of necessary IT to support our transformation have been procured. A dedicated Project Manager with extensive experience of leading change programmes in local authorities has been appointed through to end March 2020 providing much needed expertise and experience to the team while iESE remain our 'critical friend' should we need to draw on their expertise and contacts as we conclude the programme.
- 2.3 It is likely that the end date of the programme may be extended slightly giving a longer 'tail' of activity through to June / July 2020 to minimise disruption to customers while transitioning processes and systems.
- 2.4 As the transformation programme is a significant change for the Council with far-reaching implications for our processes, systems and resources a number of staff have left employment at the Council in recent months, resulting in a short term need to resource some areas with temporary or fixed term appointments. However, the priority wherever possible has been to utilise internal secondments providing staff with additional development opportunities whilst we consider the future structure of the Council.
- 2.5 In order to take steps to address retention and maintain staff morale through a period of significant change, social activities and employee benefits are being arranged for staff as well as raising the profile of our

flexible working arrangements, and other benefits for working for the council, which are already appreciated by staff.

- 2.6 During this current financial year our focus will be on implementing new IT systems resulting in new processes and work flows. This is supported with a new behavioural framework, new team structures and the introduction of job role families which together provides a robust strategic framework within which we can appoint and support the development of individual members of staff. There will inevitably be a level of disruption to services as staff are put at risk of redundancy, assimilated into new roles, or supported through the appointment process. While a Voluntary Redundancy scheme will remain in place for the duration of the programme, the intention is to minimise the number of redundancies as far as possible and, of course, to minimise the level of disruption to services.
- 2.7 A challenging agenda lies ahead, not only with the transformation programme, but also with significant external projects including Otterpool Park, Princes Parade, High Streets Regeneration, and the delivery of new affordable homes into our Housing Revenue Account. This is putting some strains on the resourcing of particular teams within the Council, particularly the Strategic Development team and Development Management team. New approaches are being considered to support the delivery of services in these areas, including the outsourcing of work to specialist firms in order to clear the current backlog of, for example, basic Development Management work. As far as the adequacy of the current staff resources is concerned they are adequate to discharge duties for the level of ambition, activity and the functions the council currently undertakes. As a result the intention is to keep the resources under review throughout the year.
- 2.8 Unlike other annual reports, the detailed organisational structure chart have not been appended showing the staffing structure of the council as the teams are subject to significant change. However, the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and senior level structure is included as appendix 1. Work is currently in-hand reviewing this to ensure that from April 2020, the most efficient senior structure is in place to provide the necessary leadership to the council, while also designing for succession management and resilience which are key principles of the transformation programme.
- 2.9 The Council also continues to experience some recruitment difficulties, with a buoyant East Kent job market for selected roles. To ensure that the Council has the ability to attract, retain and reward the very best resources, while keeping up with market pressures and benchmarked data from comparator councils elsewhere, a new pay scale is being proposed which is the subject of a separate paper to the Committee.
- 2.10 This report has provided a high level overview of the main resourcing considerations as at the end of May 2019. Expectations are that 2019/2020 will be a year of significant change in resourcing and one that will see a complete transformation in our systems and processes. The customer will remain at the heart of our digital service delivery which will provide modern 24/7 accessibility for our customers, along with improved resilience across teams, while also making efficiency savings in the overall

resourcing budget. The senior team remains firmly committed to providing excellence in all the services we deliver.

### **3. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS**

#### **3.1 Legal Officer's Comments (AK)**

There are no legal implications arising directly out of this report.

#### **3.2 Finance Officer's Comments (LH)**

There is a budget for the approved staffing structure for the Council. This means that it is fully funded. In addition, there are controls in place to ensure that additional posts to this structure are only approved when funding has been identified. Employees' costs are monitored monthly with the Corporate Leadership Team receiving a monthly report of projections compared to budget.

#### **3.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (ASm)**

There are no specific Diversities and Equalities Implications arising from this report.

### **4. CONTACT OFFICER AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting:

Andrina Smith, Chief HR Officer  
Tel: 01303 853405  
Email: [andrina.smith@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:andrina.smith@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

None

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – CLT & Direct Reports