

SPECIAL COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2014

PRESENT:- Councillors David Renard (Chair), Mark Dempsey, Fionuala Foley, Jim Grant, Garry Perkins, Brian Mattock (Vice-Chair), Des Moffatt, Stan Pajak and Mike Bawden.

16. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

17. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

18. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved – That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in Agenda Item No. 8 of the Notice of the Meeting on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information concerned. (Minute 22 refers.)

19. Public Question Time

No public questions were asked under Standing Order 28.

20. Adjustments to the Council's Organisational Structure

The Chief Executive submitted a report concerning (a) proposed changes to the Council's organisational and management structure, particularly, relating to accountabilities at the "Tier 1" and "Tier 2" level, and (b) a proposal to establish a One Swindon Multi-Agency Transformation Hub to deliver public sector transformation in Swindon.

The Chief Executive presented the report setting out the reasons why the proposed changes were considered necessary at this time and detailing each proposed change to accountabilities. He referred to the significance and importance for the future of the Council and the Borough of the proposed One Swindon Transformation Hub. He explained that this report sought to gain approval for work to commence on establishing this multi-agency hub and that further reports would be made to Councillors as work progressed and the Hub developed.

Members noted the proposed changes and commented on the importance of Streetsmart services to local residents and ward councillors. They sought reassurances that in the interim period whilst structural changes were being made, there would be continuity in the delivery of these services and contact points would

remain clear and unambiguous. The Chief Executive and the Board Director, Service Delivery, confirmed that steps would be taken to ensure that there would be no significant effect on the delivery of these services and that clarity was provided to where responsibilities for services would rest in the interim period before the new structure was in place.

Reference was made to the effective operation of the localities function. The role of localities in building community capacity and resilience, particularly in respect of support for children and families and adult social care, was welcomed but it was believed there was also support from many Councillors for the current role played by localities officers in supporting Ward Councillors in responding to issues affecting local residents across a range of different Services. The proposed changes to Housing services and to Public Protection were noted and Councillors hoped that the culture and experience of the Housing team would not be diluted by the proposed changes. In particular, it was hoped that the Housing team's experience of dealing with problem tenants could be shared with officers across the Borough as a result of these changes.

Resolved – (1) That, on behalf of the Council, the changes in management accountabilities and, where appropriate, structure for the Chief Executive, Board Directors and Tier 2 posts, as referred to in paragraphs 3.4 to 3.12 of the report, including the deletion of the existing Head of Public Protection and Streetsmart post, be approved

(2) That, following formal consultation with affected staff, where required, the Chief Executive be authorised to implement the revised, interim structure as referred to in the report as soon as practicable.

(3) That the Director of Law and Democratic Services be authorised to amend the Council's Constitution to reflect the changes referred to in (1) and (2) above.

(4) That the move towards more multi-agency ways of working referred to in the report, including exploration of a collaborative and impactful approach to volunteering, be noted and the Council's participation in the development and implementation of a One Swindon Transformation Hub as referred to in paragraphs 3.13 to 3.14 of the report, be approved.

21. Employment Terms and Conditions for New Chief Officers

The Chief Executive and the Head of People and Development submitted a joint report concerning proposals for terms and conditions of employment for newly appointed Chief Officers to the Council (Minute 15(c) refers).

The Head of People and Development explained that at its last meeting the Committee had reviewed and agreed some changes to terms and conditions of employment for existing Chief Officers. The Committee had requested that a separate review of terms and conditions for new Chief Officers be undertaken. This report highlighted the findings of the review and the proposed terms and conditions of employment to be applied to newly appointed Chief Officers to the Council.

Resolved – (1) That, on behalf of the Council, the Special Committee approves that the roles within the Council with responsibility for statutory functions, as outlined in paragraph 3.2.1 of the report, and any non-statutory Board Director posts, be the only roles within the Council for which specific Chief Officer terms and conditions of employment be applied and that would be subject to appointment by Councillors.

(2) That the roles referred to in (1) above for which Chief Officer terms and conditions of employment be applied, receive the different terms and conditions of employment to other employees of the Council, as outlined in paragraph 3.9.2 of the report.

(3) That the changes referred to in (1) and (2) above be implemented with immediate effect.

(4) That existing Chief Officers retain, as protected rights, their current terms and conditions of employment, including those agreed by Minute 15 of the Special Committee on 5 November 2013.

22. Redundancy Severance

The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive submitted a joint report concerning the redundancy severance arrangements for Employee No. 1129760B.

The Head of People and Development circulated a revised version of the original report as further analysis had resulted in a change in the Employee's length of service which affected the calculation of the severance payment.

The Chief Executive referred to the decision taken earlier in the meeting regarding the Council's future organisational structure and the reasons why he believed the proposals put forward were in the best interests of the Council. He confirmed that the exact notice period for the Employee had still to be finalised as it was linked to the implementation of the organisational changes and this could affect the actual final severance payment. The figure illustrated would be the maximum payable should the Employee leave the Council's employment.

The Head of People and Development explained the rationale that had been adopted in arriving at the financial position set out in the report and how this was comparable to the approach adopted in other similar circumstances.

Councillor Des Moffatt referred to the appendices to the report and his belief that they should specify that the calculations of redundancy pay were based on the Council's policy which reflected the local government "industry norm" and not the minimum statutory requirement.

Resolved – (1) That the redundancy severance arrangements for employee 1129760B, as set out in the revised joint report, be approved.

(2) That, in the event that no suitable, alternative employment is found, the Head of People and Development be authorised to issue notice to employee 1129760B.