

REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed :			
Any especially affected Wards	Operational	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide		YES	
		Need to be recommendations to Council		NO	
		Is it a Key Decision		NO	
Lead Member: Cllr Alistair Beales, Leader E-mail: cllr.alistair.beales@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted: Cabinet Members			
		Other Members consulted: None			
Lead Officer: Kate Blakemore E-mail: kate.blakemore@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Officers consulted: Alexa Baker, Monitoring Officer			
Financial Implications YES	Policy/ Personnel Implications YES	Statutory Implications NO	Equal Impact Assessment NO	Risk Management Implications YES	Environmental Considerations NO

Date of meeting: 4th February 2025

APPROVAL UNDER STANDING ORDER 23 THAT RESTRUCTURED CHIEF OFFICER POSTS ARE NECESSARY

Summary

Under the Constitution, Cabinet is required to determine that a "chief officer" post is necessary before any step is taken to advertise or fill a vacancy for that post. A chief officer means the statutory chief officers plus those posts that sit in Tier 2 of the senior management structure, directly reporting into the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive has reviewed Tier 2 of the senior management structure and as a result the Tier 2 posts that were previously referred to as 'Executive Directors' have been removed from the structure. Instead, Tier 2 now consists of a Chief Operating Officer and a Deputy Chief Executive. This creates a reduction from 3 posts to 2.

Approval is therefore sought from Cabinet that the two new posts are necessary before any steps are taken with regards to recruitment into those posts.

Recommendation

Cabinet resolves:

1. Under Standing Order 23 that the restructured chief officer posts of Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer are necessary enabling the Chief Executive to progress the recruitment of her senior team.

Reason for Decision

To provide sufficient capacity and expertise at a senior level to support the Chief Executive and wider organisation in delivering the Corporate Strategy and Council services.

1. Background

- 1.1 As a result of a constantly changing external environment within which the Council operates, a review of the current senior management structure has been undertaken to consider alternative delivery models. The organisation has been operating for a substantial period with two Executive Director posts vacant. With this in mind, it is an appropriate juncture to consider how the senior management team should be structured in order to meet the new challenges of increased efficiency, resident expectation as regards service delivery and the wider Local Government Reorganisation (“LGR”).
- 1.2 The proposals were discussed with the Senior Leadership Team, the Trade Union and others potentially directly affected by the changes. The overall aim was to provide both clarity around the proposals and the opportunity for questions to be addressed at an early stage in the process. In addition, a 30-day consultation exercise was commenced, with individuals being requested to provide their thoughts and ideas on the new proposals.
- 1.3 The consultation responses have now been considered and responses provided as regards each of the individual comments. The consultation responses, management comments and potential impacts on the proposed structure have been presented to the Senior Leadership Team and other staff that may be directly affected.
- 1.4 The consultation responses were positive, with the vast majority of consultees accepting the rationale of needing to increase accountability and responsibility by creating 2 new roles; one internally focused, with the other concentrating on frontline service delivery to residents. In addition, this approach would provide the Chief Executive with additional capacity to be externally focused; enhancing existing housing and economic growth across the Borough.

2. Proposed Structure

- 2.1 The consultation exercise confirmed that the proposal provided clear accountability and responsibility between internal and frontline service provision through the creation of both a Deputy Chief Executive (DCX) and Chief Operating Officer (COO) roles. The DCX being focused internally, whilst the COO focused on frontline service delivery to residents.
- 2.2 The consultation also highlighted a number of other minor changes which have been incorporated into the final senior management structure. Appendix 1 provides a structure chart of the current Senior Management Structure with Appendix 2 showing the various changes.
- 2.3 In summary, with the agreement of Cabinet for the need for the two new posts (DCX and COO), the new structure will consist of;
 - A new Deputy Chief Executive role that will focus on internal service delivery. This will provide a clear focus on the efficient and effective delivery of the support services that underpin frontline service delivery.
 - A new Chief Operating Officer role that will take responsibility for direct service delivery to residents. Thereby providing real clarity in respect of external and internal service delivery.

- The existing 3 Executive Director roles will be deleted and removed from the staffing complement.
- The Assistant Directors (ADs) for Regeneration Housing and Place, and Environment and Planning will report directly to the Chief Executive to support the enhanced drive to deliver housing and growth.

2.4 In addition to the changes above, which are directly associated with the restructure proposal, a number of other minor changes are also being progressed. To be totally clear the minor changes are not associated with the restructure proposal. These are:

- The creation of a new post of Interim AD – Transformation and Change, reporting to the new Deputy Chief Executive role, leading on both the Transformation and LGR work. The Programme Management Office will report to the Interim AD – Transformation and Change. This will be ringfenced to internal applicants only through secondment for an initial 12 months.
- To change the AD Finance and Resources/S151 Officer role description to Chief Finance Officer/S151. The aim to ensure that the title appropriately reflects the actual role of the post holder.

2.5 The above structural changes will also impact on a number of AD reporting lines. These can best be illustrated by reference to the Proposed Senior Management Structure diagram at Appendix 2.

3 Policy Implications

3.1 The new chief officer roles will enhance the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and the Council's wider policy framework.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 The arrangements detailed above in respect of the permanent DCX and COO roles can be funded as highlighted in the table below:

Costs	£ per annum
	Mid point (excluding on costs)
Deputy Chief Executive Chief Operating Officer	£204,000

Funding	£ per annum
	Actuals (excluding on costs)
Savings from deletion of 3 Executive Directors	£306,000
Total	-£102,000

Note: Salaries based on 2023/24 salaries

4.2 The recruitment of the two new posts, if agreed, will be managed internally within the organisation. Therefore, there are no specific additional recruitment costs associated with filling these two new roles.

4.3 The funding of the Interim AD – Transformation and Change will be funded via the Councils Invest to Save/Transformation Fund.

5 Personnel Implications

- 5.1 The proposed revisions to the Council's organisational structure can be accommodated within existing resources, using the funds associated with the deletion of the 3 Executive director posts to cover the new Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer roles.
- 5.2 Other changes required to bring the revised structure into effect, will be changes to reporting lines, which will be managed in accordance with normal procedures for such changes.

6 Environmental Considerations

None

7 Statutory Considerations

None

8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

There are no EIP implications in respect of the decision to agree the need for the two new chief officer roles.

9 Risk Management Implications

- 9.1 The changes associated with the proposed new Senior Management Structure provide a clear line of accountability and responsibility, something which at present is unclear. Having a clear distinction between internal and frontline service delivery provides clarity across the organisation, including both staff and Councillors. It also provides additional specific senior management capacity, enabling the current Chief Executive to concentrate on the wider strategic challenges around housing and growth. Agreeing the need for these two posts, will provide the organisation with the appropriate structure, resources and capability to address the many challenges it faces.
- 9.2 To continue with the existing structure will increase the risk of continued confusion as regards clear accountability and responsibility for delivery. In addition it risks not ensuring the Council has the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to address the main challenges it faces. Especially with the publishing of the governments White Paper on Local Government Reorganisation.

10 Background Papers

The following papers are attached for Councillors information;

Appendix 1 – Existing Management Structure diagram

Appendix 2 – Proposed Management Structure diagram

Appendix 3 – Draft Job Descriptions and Person Specification for the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer roles

Stage 1 - Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

For equalities profile information please visit [Norfolk Insight - Demographics and Statistics - Data Observatory](#)

Name of policy/service/function	Senior Management Team				
Is this a new or existing policy/service/function? (<i>tick as appropriate</i>)	New		Existing	x	
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations, and identify relevant legislation.	To provide leadership and direction to the wider organisation.				
Who has been consulted as part of the development of the policy/service/function? – new only (<i>identify stakeholders consulted with</i>)	Senior Management Team Others potentially affected by the change				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group. NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p> <p><i>If potential adverse impacts are identified, then a full Equality Impact Assessment (Stage 2) will be required.</i></p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			x	
	Disability			x	
	Sex			x	
	Gender Re-assignment			X	
	Marriage/civil partnership			x	
	Pregnancy & maternity			x	
	Race			x	
	Religion or belief			x	
	Sexual orientation			x	
	Armed forces community			x	
	Care leavers			x	
Other (eg low income, caring responsibilities)			x		
Please provide a brief explanation of the answers above:					

Question	Answer	Comments
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No	
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No	
4. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section	No	Actions:
		Actions agreed by EWG member:
<p>If 'yes' to questions 2 - 4 a full impact assessment will be required unless comments are provided to explain why this is not felt necessary:</p> <p>Decision agreed by EWG member:</p>		
5. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	No	Please provide brief summary:
Assessment completed by: Name	Kate Blakemore	
Job title	Chief Executive Officer	
Date completed	30 January 2025	
Reviewed by EWG member		Date

Please tick to confirm completed EIA Pre-screening Form has been shared with Corporate Policy (corporate.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk)