

SPECIAL EXECUTIVE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

THURSDAY, 17 MAY 2018

Councillors Present: Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Anthony Chadley, Jeanette Clifford, Hilary Cole, Lynne Doherty, James Fredrickson, Graham Jones and Rick Jones

Also Present: John Ashworth (Corporate Director - Environment), Nick Carter (Chief Executive), Tandra Forster (Head of Adult Social Care), Robert O'Reilly (Head of Human Resources), Councillor Jeff Brooks, Stephen Chard (Principal Policy Officer), Councillor Lee Dillon, Councillor Mollie Lock, Councillor Alan Macro and Gabrielle Mancini (Group Executive - Conservatives)

Apology for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Marcus Franks

PART I

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

2. New post of Executive Director (Communities)

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 3) which sought permission to delete the post of Corporate Director (Communities) and replace it with a new post of Executive Director (Communities) to include the new role of Deputy Chief Executive. The report also sought the funding required to support the new remuneration package.

Councillor Graham Jones introduced the report. He explained that he had discussed the proposals with Councillor Lee Dillon. Councillor Jeff Brooks, as Shadow Portfolio Holder, had also been briefed.

Councillor Graham Jones further explained that the proposals had been formed following discussions with, and the receipt of expert advice from, South East Employers (SEE). The additional funding proposed was a recognition of the importance of attracting the right candidate for the role, the differentials created for the post and the fact that the post holder would be responsible for a number of high risk areas for the Council.

Councillor Graham Jones also drew the Executive's attention to paragraph 2.3 of the supporting information to the report. This explained that SEE had been commissioned to undertake a review of senior management remuneration. The report, expected in the coming months, would also reflect upon the emerging structural options that could be considered.

Councillor Lynne Doherty commented on the post continuing to be 'twin hatted', an approach which worked well for the Council. The Test of Assurance, Appendix F to the report, concluded that this approach remained viable. The Test of Assurance was produced in line with an Ofsted recommendation in 2015 and was revisited earlier this year.

Councillor Doherty continued by explaining that there was a competitive market for recruitment in the social care arena. Market pressures needed to be met in order to recruit the right calibre of person to this senior role. Councillor Doherty was confident that this reconfigured role would be to West Berkshire's benefit.

Councillor Jeff Brooks explained that the Liberal Democrat Group was broadly supportive of the proposals and understood their reasoning. He sought assurance, as part of the interview process, that as well as the successful candidate having the necessary

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specialist knowledge in Children's Services and Adult Social Care, that an understanding was gained as to whether the successful candidate also held the necessary strategic and corporate capability to perform, in particular, the Deputy Chief Executive element of the role.

In response to a query from Councillor Graham Jones in relation to whether the Job Description and Person Specification adequately covered this requirement, Councillor Brooks explained that he felt these to be acceptable, he felt that the wider breadth of capability was something to be drawn out through the interview process.

Councillor Graham Jones noted the points made by Councillor Brooks.

Councillor Alan Macro voiced a concern should an incidence occur where the Chief Executive was absent for an unexpected period of time, through sickness for example, and queried whether the Deputy Chief Executive would be able to cover for the Chief Executive as well as fulfilling the other duties of their substantive role. He questioned whether the Test of Assurance should be revisited to cover this eventuality.

In response, Councillor Graham Jones explained that the existing level of senior management capacity would not change in terms of covering a longer term absence. Nick Carter agreed that the senior management structure would be essentially unchanged. He did not feel that the addition of the Deputy Chief Executive element to the post warranted a need to revisit the Test of Assurance. This would only become a need should a wider restructure take place at Head of Service level.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The post of Corporate Director (Communities) be deleted and replaced with a new post of Executive Director (Communities) to include the new role of Deputy Chief Executive.
- (2) The additional funding of £23,186 per annum, required to support the new post, be agreed.

Other options considered: In all other respects the Council's senior management arrangements remain unchanged.

(The meeting commenced at 1.30pm and closed at 1.40pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature