

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL CABINET

8 MARCH 2022

CABINET MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR STRATEGY – COUNCILLOR JONATHAN NUNN

Report Title	Organisation Structure change
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Appendix 1

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to update cabinet on proposed changes to the Councils directorate structure and senior roles and which have been subject to consultation with effected staff and included in the Pay Policy Statement presented to Council on 24 February 2022. The changes proposed include;
- 1.2. Transformation – To change the management, structure and approach in relation to the current transformation service and its delivery approach.

- 1.3. Communities and Opportunities - The creation of a new Directorate for Communities and Opportunities, transfer of existing staff and services to it, creation of new Assistant Director post for Place Shaping and proposed appointment to the new Director of Communities and Opportunities post to oversee the new directorate
- 1.4. Children and Education – Change to The Councils DCS arrangements and senior structure to manage children and Education services.
- 1.5. Emergency Planning - Changes to the Assistant Director for Customer services post following the inclusion of Emergency Planning within their future remit
- 1.6. Public Health– To provide Cabinet with an update on the disaggregation of Public Health staff and the appointment of an interim Director of Public Health in line with previous delegations.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. As the Council approaches its one-year anniversary, senior officers with cabinet have reflected on the council's officer structure, capacity and approach. We want to ensure that the Council is organised in a way that will maximise its ability to deliver its corporate plan and longer-term improved outcomes for local people and places, and that this is done within a sustainable budget.
- 2.2 We have also reflected on how our senior management structures need to adapt following the previous decisions to end the joint arrangements with North Northants Council for shared Directors of both Public Health and Children's service and given the challenges that all councils are facing in recruiting these key senior roles.
- 2.2 In the context of this reflection the following changes have been progressed in consultation with cabinet. This report provides a summary of the actions taken and next steps.

2.3. Transformation

The majority of the central transformation team staff will transfer to Directorates to act as embedded project and change teams to support service improvements, savings delivery and business as usual projects. This will ensure that the Directorates can meet their corporate priorities in the most effective and efficient way possible (The structure chart is provided in appendix 1). In addition, we will retain a small central Project Management Office (PMO) that acts an assurance function to the distributed teams and ensures that we maintain rigorous project reporting, monitoring and financial delivery.

This change will include the deletion of the Director of Transformation post and two others but as part of consultation with Staff and unions suitable alternative posts have been identified for all three staff. In the case of the transformation director the alternative post is in the new Directorate of Communities and Opportunities set out below.

- 2.3. **Communities and Opportunities** – This involves creation of a new Directorate for Communities and Opportunities and transfer of staff and services to it from Adults and Communities (Housing,

community services and Libraries) and the Place Directorate (Economic Development, skills, culture and the visitor economy). This change will bring increased focus on Place by bringing together Housing and Communities alongside place shaping and create increased strategic capacity created to support delivery of change in line with the national agenda for levelling up. (The structure chart is provided in appendix 1)

This change also includes the creation of two new senior posts.

- a Director for Communities and Opportunities which is subject to the Chief Officer Appointment and Pay Policy, and
- the Assistant Director of Place Shaping.

The Assistant Director of Place shaping is a key role in the Councils economic and skills strategies and will be subject to an external recruitment campaign but also open to internal candidates.

The Transformation Director role has been removed as a result of the changes to the Transformation Team and the current member of staff is at risk. Having consulted on the new role of Director of Communities and Opportunities it has been confirmed as a suitable alternative role under the council's redeployment policy.

- 2.4. **Children and Education** – This will see the statutory Director of Children's Services (DCS) role and internal staff and education services moved to report into the current Executive Director for Adults, Communities and wellbeing portfolio and the creation of a new a People Directorate responsible for all adults and childrens services for the council with the Executive Director for Adults, Communities and wellbeing, also renamed as Executive Director for People. This will provide increased connectivity between Children's and Adults Social Care and support the Councils transformation agenda around helping all adults and children to live their best life and Integrated Care System (ICS) work.

This change will also mean that the statutory responsibility for children (DCS role) and adults (DASS) role will be vested in the Executive Director of People. The Executive Director will be supported by a permanent Assistant Director of Education, responsible for the schools and SEND agenda and a new role, the Strategic Manager for childrens social care providing assurance and oversight of the Childrens trust on a day-to-day basis for the Council. (The structure chart is provided in Appendix 1). Both roles will be subject to external recruitment and will ensure that we have the right strategic focus on Childrens and Adults and robust operational and assurance management. This proposal also recognises the national challenges in DCS recruitment as many Councils are currently out for recruitment and many of the competing Councils offer roles where the DCS will oversee the operation of Childrens social services, which they will not in West Northants. This change also prepares the Council for the results of the inspecting local authority services for children (ILACS) to be carried out by OFSTED during 2022 and which will for the first-time report on West Northants and North Northants childrens social services separately.

- 2.5. **Emergency planning** – Following disaggregation from a shared service with North Northants Emergency planning will be managed by the Assistant Director for Customer services expanding the role of remit of the current Assistant Director and placing our statutory duties in relation to emergency planning, business continuity and the operational management of out of hours cover within their control.

- 2.6. **Public Health** – Following cabinet approval in December 2021 that the blueprint will be amended from 31st March 2022 to include a separate Director of Public Health (DPH) for North and West Northamptonshire Councils. Both Councils now have an interim DPH in post and ahead of the planned disaggregation of the wider Public Health services planned in April 2022.

Now that an interim DPH is in place in each Council they will need to jointly review and discuss the resources across this wider Public Health staff base and agree how the planned disaggregation will be managed. This will include consideration of how Public Health will continue to support the Population Health Management plans with Health as part of the Integrated Care System (ICS), any areas or specialisms that will continued to be shared across the Councils and where it is agreed we should split the services, contracts or functions. Where services are split each Council will need to consider whether that will lead to the need for additional investment in order to meet our strategic aims and statutory duties. Any changes to the blueprint will be subject to formal agreement between the councils and will need to be signed off by Cabinet.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- a) Note the changes to the Councils approach and changes to the Directorate structures and key roles as follows.
 - Creation of a new Directorate of Communities and Opportunities
 - The creation of a new Directorate of People encompassing Adult Services and Children and Education Services

- b) Note the changes included in the Pay Policy including:
 - Removal of the Chief Officer post of Director of Transformation
 - Creation of the new Director of Communities and Opportunities post.

- c) Note the delegated responsibility to the Senior Appointments Committee for the permanent appointment of a Director of Communities and Opportunities once staff and union consultation has completed and interviews undertaken.

4. Reason for Recommendations

- 4.1. The changes outlined in this report will best enable the Council to deliver its corporate priorities and statutory duties

5. Report Background

- 5.1 **Transformation** - The current transformation team is centralised and sitting in corporate services with staff allocated to support projects and programmes by the central management team who also track and report on projects. The work of the team has been largely focused on disaggregation in the Councils first year as stabilisation and the process of splitting services has been more cumbersome than expected. This work is not complete and there are some complex services and contracts to be split in the coming year. The centralised nature of the service also means that transformation is not always as closely connected to business need as we would like.
- 5.2 The arrangements were put in place pre vesting day reflected the set up of the Future Northants LGR programme and it inherited a lot of the inflight work. But this has meant that there has been less focus on strategic transformation than we would have liked and to do both we were potentially faced with having to make further investment in more transformation staff to support the disaggregation process completion and service transformation.
- 5.3 Rather than do this the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) agreed it would be more beneficial to embed transformation in the services and for the Directorates to become responsible for the delivery of their transformation and disaggregation supported by their own teams and retaining accountability in one place for delivery, savings and reporting. Rather than invest more in additional staff this also provides the options from transformation reserves to target key areas of transformation with specialist or external resource to achieve aggregation and consolidation faster.
- 5.4 Consultation has been undertaken for the transformation staff to be transferred to Directorates and the line management within each directorate to act as embedded project and change teams and service improvements, savings delivery and business as usual projects that ensure the services can meet their corporate priorities and are accountable for their own delivery.
- 5.5 The services will also be responsible for the oversight and execution of the service related Inter Authority Agreements (IAA) and their own projects and savings reporting.
- 5.6 The devolved model will be supported with a smaller central assurance function and Project Management Office (PMO) remaining in Corporate services. The current and proposed structure can be seen in Appendix 1
- 5.7 The approach will reduce duplication and bureaucracy and will enable the Council to make best use of its transformation resource in delivering its corporate priorities.
- 5.8 **Directorate of Communities and Opportunities-** The creation of a new directorate of Communities and Opportunities supports the cross-cutting elements of both the People and Place service in relation to place shaping, focussed upon.

- the creation of safe and thriving neighbourhoods where people to have access to good quality homes
- more opportunities for West Northants residents to develop the skills to ensure secure good quality jobs,
- the development of West Northants as a place where businesses thrive and grow and we attract ongoing investment, and
- putting West Northants on the map as a great place to visit

- 5.9 The new Directorate will be created by the transfer of existing staff within housing, communities, and Leisure (in ACW currently) and the teams from Economic Development, Regeneration and Culture services (in PEE) currently.
- 5.10 The directorate will be overseen by a new Director of Communities and Opportunities bringing new service delivery capacity and two Assistant Directors (ADs)– the existing AD of housing and communities and a new AD for Place shaping.
- 5.11 The current and future structure can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 5.12 Current People and Place Directorates have significant service scope and responsibility, and this is causing the current Exec Directors and Assistant Directors to be stretched very thinly, with high workloads, a large number cabinet member and members interest and the staff survey showed concerns about stress and work life balance and work levels.
- 5.13 In addition to limited capacity to respond to such wide-ranging agendas and issues there is also limited capacity to progress strategic planning and therefore a number of strategies and initiatives have been slow to materialise. Cabinet would like to see increased senior capacity to drive the pace and transformation delivery and recognise that the structure is much leaner than predecessor Councils in terms of senior leadership to staff ratios.
- 5.14 There is an increasing focus across all public sector partners on “place shaping” and thriving communities – it’s about using our assets to drive improvements for everyone. There is also a strong national focus on levelling up. The anticipated white paper is likely to mirror the focus of ICS work - reducing health & wellbeing inequalities and barriers to equal opportunities by working closely with partners and business to create the conditions for people to achieve their outcomes and potential.
- 5.15 Levelling up and ICS focus on wider determinants of health meet between the Adults, Communities and Wellbeing (ACW) directorate and the Place, Economy and Environment (PEE) Directorate and the creation of the new Directorate headed by a new will give us greater focus on these issues. But the new Director will report initially into both People and Place to ensure alignment of dependencies and plan that will cross areas. Once fully established the Directorate will form part of the overall Place Directorate
- 5.16 **Children and Education** - Prior to the departure of the shared Director of Children’s Services (DCS) and the decision to appoint a dedicated DCS for West Northants, the Council had a shared DCS overseeing a North and West AD of Education and an AD of Contract and Commissioning who oversees the Client Unit that monitors the Children’s Trust via the contract. The DCS acted

as the lead statutory officer for our children's statutory responsibility and lead practitioner for safeguarding and monitoring of practices within all children's services.

- 5.17 Under the new arrangements the current Directorate of Adults, Communities and Wellbeing, will become the People Directorate and the current Executive Director of Adults, Communities and Wellbeing will become the Executive Director of People and hold the statutory responsibilities of both the DASS and DCS.
- 5.18 To ensure that the Executive Director of People is supported to deliver the priorities and outcomes for Children's and Education, they will be supported by 3 key roles;
- A permanent AD of Education to replace current interim (also acting DCS)
 - Recruit new Strategic Manager for children's social care practice to sit in the client Unit and
 - The existing shared AD of Commissioning and Contracts that runs the client unit for children's and education and oversight of the Children's Trust.
 - The current and proposed structure can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 5.19 **Emergency Planning** - A proposed change to the grading for the AD of Customer Services following the transfer of the Emergency Planning for West Northants to the Assistant Director because of the disaggregation of the North.
- 5.20 The role will now include being the lead on the Council's Emergency Planning and Business Continuity strategy and provide support and advice to managers, leaders, and partners through directing the Emergency Planning workstreams.
- 5.21 This extended scope means that the AD is also the lead for multi-agency strategic programmes across a wide range of organisations to protect the people, environment and economy of West Northamptonshire from a range of hazards and threats include communicable diseases, civil emergencies, terrorism and violent crime.
- 5.22 The role will also now officially be made responsible leading and managing corporate complaints (for both the Council and Children's Trust) and dealing with Ombudsman enquiries and for leading and managing MP and Members' enquiries and ensuring a high-quality service is provided.
- 5.23 There is no change to staffing numbers, structures or vacancies.
- 5.24 There will be an increase in cost if the role is grader higher, but this cost will be met from the service budget and existing funded vacancies in the EP structure when transferred.
- 5.25 **Public Health** – Following cabinet approval in December 2021 that the blueprint will be amended from 31st March 2022 to include a separate Director of Public Health for North and West Northamptonshire Councils. Both Councils now have an Interim Director of Public Health in post and ahead of the planned disaggregation of Public Health Services post April 2022 and creation of the new Integrated Care System (ICS) now planned for July 2022.

Now that the interim DPH is in place in each Council they will need to jointly review and discuss the resources across the wider Public Health staff base and agree how the planned disaggregation will be managed. They will also need to agree the joint model for supporting the population health management work and outcomes framework within the ICS and how we jointly staff the ongoing joint intelligence unit.

The disaggregation work will include consideration of any areas or specialisms that will continued to be shared across the Councils or led by one Council and where its agreed we are splitting the services and if this means we will require additional investment in additional roles. Any changes to the blueprint will be subject to formal agreement between the councils and will need to be signed off by Cabinet.

6. Issues and Choices

- 6.1 The changes set out in this report enable the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in the most efficient and effective way forward.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

- 7.1. There are no staff redundancies anticipated as a result of the changes detailed in this report. The funding for these proposals can be met from the one-off transformation funds for the next financial year but should any of the posts continue after this point there will need to be budget growth built into the budget process for 2023-24 to make the funding stream permanent.
- 7.2 **Communities and Opportunities** - Within the new Communities and Opportunities directorate there are no additional costs created as result of the creation of the Director of Communities and Opportunities (as its costs are offset by the removal of the Director of Transformation role. There are also additional Assistant Director of Place Shaping costs anticipated to be £120k including oncosts and met from contingency but all other staff are transferring from existing roles.
- 7.3 **Emergency Planning** - In Customer Services there is no additional costs for the increase in grade for the Assistant Director of Customer services to cover Emergency Planning as this will be met from within the existing Emergency Planning budget.
- 7.4 **Directorate of People and changes to Childrens and Education senior posts** - There are no additional costs from the creation of the Directorate of People or the creation of the Executive Director of people as the existing Executive Director of Adults Wellbeing and communities is taking on the additional responsibilities of DCS (alongside the DASS duties) at no extra cost. The Assistant Director of Education post is already funded within the establishment so there will be no extra cost from recruitment to this post. There will be an additional cost for the strategic Manager of Children's Social Care, but this is offset as we are not recruiting to a full time DCS.
- 7.5 **Public Health** – additional costs for the separate DPH roles in West and North Northants were approved by Cabinet previously and covered by the Public Health Grant. At this stage there is no indication of any additional costs for the planned separation of wider Public Health services. This

will be subject to review as we progress plans to split the service and/or decide where we will continue to share some specialisms.

8. Legal

- 8.1 There are no legal implications from the proposed changes as the Council will continue to provide statutory functions and officers required through the proposed changes.

9. Risk

- 9.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

10. Consultation

- 10.1 A Consultation / Communication plan has commenced with impacted transformation staff and the trade unions have been provided with an overview of the proposals and changes and plans for those staff affected and services effected.

11. Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

- 11.1 Not applicable.

12. Climate Impact

- 12.1 Not applicable.

13. Community Impact

- 13.1 It is envisaged that there will be a positive impact as a result of the creation of the Directorate of Communities and Opportunities. This will create more focus on place shaping with community partners and local Town and Parish Councils as well as working to ensure that our communities are safe places where people make the most of leisure and green spaces. The new Directorate will also have a remit for the creation of a skills strategy aligned to what businesses tell us they need and to encourage the growth of new business, regeneration and a successful and thriving visitor economy that brings wealth into West Northants.

14. Background Papers

- a. Appendix 1