

Extract from the minutes of the 6 October 2011 meeting of Cabinet.

131. Senior Management Restructuring

Public Participation

Mr Phil Matthews addressed Cabinet on this matter suggesting that any savings made should be used for health care.

The Leader presented her report which proposed changes to the senior management structure of the Council. If approved, the changes would result in the deletion of the posts of Chief Executive and one Corporate Director. Details of the structure as proposed were presented.

The Leader explained the context in which she had developed her proposal. The Council was under financial pressures to make savings of £100 million over the next four years, with £36 million of those savings to be found next year. The proposal would reduce annual management costs by approximately £200,000 in the current year 2011/12 and would deliver full year savings in 2012/13 of £400,000. This would provide a saving of £1.4 million over the period of the current four year Business Plan.

The Leader explained that the Council was in a strong position to be able to realise its key priority to deliver the strategic four year Business Plan which set out how the Council intended to manage the challenge it faced over the next few years.

The Leader acknowledged that the senior management restructuring as proposed could be regarded by some to be radical but that it had been reached after careful consideration and was based on delivering what she believed to be best for the people of Wiltshire. The proposal would reduce resources from senior strategic posts in order to minimise the impact on front line services.

Local authorities had a statutory duty to designate one of its officers as head of paid service. The statutory role of the head of paid service was most closely aligned with the responsibilities of the Council's Service Director, Human Resources and Organisational Development. It was therefore proposed that the role be designated to this post, subject to Council's approval.

Feedback on the proposal had been invited specifically from those directly affected and from all other staff. A joint response from the Corporate Directors and the Joint Director of Public Health who was not affected by the proposal was presented. The response stated their commitment to the proposal.

The Council's external auditors, KPMG had been made aware of the proposal and had provided some helpful feedback.

The Service Director, Law and Governance explained the consequential matters which would be required should the proposal be approved such as reviewing the Scheme of Delegation for Officers and other parts of the constitution. He also

explained that the Senior Officers Employment Sub-Committee would need to meet to consider the dismissal of the Chief Executive and a Corporate Director on the grounds of redundancy with any such decision on the Chief Executive post requiring confirmation by the full Council. The Officers Appointments Committee would also need to meet to determine the appointment to the three remaining Corporate Director posts.

The Leader opened the proposal to full debate and responded to questions which included responding to the points submitted by the Devizes Guardian group, details of which were circulated.

The Leader took the opportunity to thank Andrew Kerr for all his hard work and commitment to Wiltshire. His contribution in delivering a clear strategic plan for the next few years had provided a strong foundation for the Council to now move forward and be in a position to adopt a new model of leadership.

Following debate, it was:

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

- (a) approve the new senior management structure as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report presented at corporate director level on the understanding that the alignment of services below that level would be determined by the Head of Paid Service following discussion by the corporate directors and in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet in accordance with paragraph 4.7 of the report presented;**
- (b) recommend to Council to designate the statutory function of Head of Paid Service to the Service Director, Human Resources and Organisational Development;**
- (c) note that the appointment of the returning officer, the arrangements for the support of the lieutenancy and any consequential changes to the constitution, including the scheme of delegation to officers would be the subject of a separate report to council and**
- (d) adopt formal individual external appraisals for corporate directors.**

Reason for Decisions

Since the formation of Wiltshire Council in April 2009 we have made radical and positive changes saving more than £14 million in the first year.

A four year Business Plan has been produced setting out actions to deliver the vision. The plan is bold, ambitious and realistic. It reflects the impact of the general election in May 2010, and how this has changed the way in which the council needs to be organised to manage the financial challenges it faces. However the financial pressures cannot be underestimated.

Over 4 years (2010-2015) the council has to absorb a cut of 28.4 per cent of grant funding from the government. Next year 2012/13 the council will need to find savings of £36 million.

Given the financial pressures the Council is faced with, to achieve savings on the senior management costs of the Council in order to minimise the reduction of resources on front line services and to continue to deliver the Business Plan.