

SUBJECT: ICT STRUCTURE

DIRECTORATE: DIRECTORATE OF RESOURCES

REPORT AUTHOR: MATT SMITH, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND IT MANAGER

Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To propose a change to the ICT team structure.

2 Executive Summary

- 2.1 The ICT Team has not been able to recruit a suitable apprentice officer to the team, causing resourcing issues.
- 2.2 It is proposed the apprentice post be made into a permanent post at a cost of £3,830 per annum rising to £5,300 over five years which can be funded from existing budgets.

3 Background

- 3.1 In July 2014, the Executive approved a new structure for the ICT team. As part of this, it was proposed to replace an existing IT Officer role with an apprentice. Overall the team was strengthened in some areas, but this was considered to be a relative weakening of skill set, but one that could be accommodated:
- 1) To contribute to the Council's overall savings target
 - 2) As some of the role could be performed with lower skills
 - 3) As it provided an opportunity to create some succession planning into the service

4 Main Body of Report

- 4.1 Initially an apprentice was appointed to the role, and has since progressed into a more senior role in the team. However, since this point, the ICT and Work-based learning team have been trying to find a suitable candidate to replace them and have not been successful as there has been limited interest in the post, even with the role being advertised on the National Apprenticeship Service Website and circulated to neighbourhood teams to attract potential candidates.
- 4.2 This is causing issues with the ability of the team to carry out all of the roles satisfactorily and having cover for all service hours being operated.
- 4.3 In addition, after some further consideration, there are some potential issues with an apprentice:
- When the apprenticeship ceases the skills built up will be lost if the post-holder does not secure a permanent role, forcing the service to start again
 - The apprenticeship scheme which the Council offers does not offer an apprenticeship with technical ICT Skills. The existing provider, First College

only offers skills for ICT users, rather than for ICT Technical staff, so it is not possible to provide the appropriate level of training through this route.

- 4.4 Any other potential provider could potentially detract from the current apprenticeship scheme. The current scheme has been built up with stakeholders and Ofsted to ensure that it operates at the highest standards possible. Any other scheme could not be managed to the amount of rigour within the current arrangements for the purposes of one post and could be detrimental to the work being done in the established scheme.
- 4.5 Therefore an alternative option would be to change the post to a more permanent role on a lower skill level to the existing IT Officers which would allow some permanency and offer a similar career path, making it more likely to attract a suitable candidate for the role.
- 4.6 The successful candidate would also be trained appropriately for the role using a variety of in-house and external training courses as deemed necessary to perform the role and also provide some career development.
- 4.7 A potential post has now been evaluated and would amount to an increase in costs of £3,580 - £5,300 per annum, which can be accommodated within existing service budgets.

5 Organisational Impacts

- 5.1 Finance – there is an additional cost outlined in para 4.5 above, which will be resourced from within existing service budgets.
- 5.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules - there are no legal implications
- 5.3 Human Resources – the establishment would need to be amended to include a new post, rather than an apprentice.

The post has been evaluated as Scale 2. The change will result in a deletion of the Apprentice post for the IT Structure and the creation of an ICT Helpdesk Operator post.

Due to the difficulties on appointing to the post it is currently vacant and therefore does not affect any staff directly. However, whilst the employees within the IT department are not directly affected by this change, they have all received consultation on the proposed change and no comments and/or queries were raised.

- 5.4 Equality, Diversity & Human Rights (including the outcome of the EA attached, if required) – There are no equality and diversity implications

6 Risk Implications

- 6.1 It is considered that a change in the post will reduce risks to the organisation of turnover and loss of skills, with additional benefits in career opportunities for the potential post holder

7 Recommendation

7.1 The Executive are recommended to approve the revised structure of the ICT Team.

Is this a key decision? No

Do the exempt information categories apply? No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply? No

How many appendices does the report contain? None

List of Background Papers: None

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