

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CABINET MEMBER MEETING
FOR STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, CULTURE AND TOURISM**

26 February 2019

**Report of the Strategic Director for Commissioning, Communities
and Policy**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW POSTS - ASSISTANT DIRECTOR of
COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMERS, PROJECT MANAGER &
PROJECT OFFICERS**

1. Purpose of the Report

To seek approval to establish a permanent post of Assistant Director of Communications and Customers.

To approve proposals to establish a channel shift programme that includes approving the creation of a temporary channel shift team

2. Information and Analysis

Communications

Cabinet, at its meeting on 31 January 2019, approved a new Enterprising Council Strategy which set out the Council's approach to becoming an Enterprising Council.

Being an enterprising council requires a rapid pace of change and a hugely challenging and ambitious one council programme of transformation which will result in long lasting cultural change. Moving away from more traditional and paternalistic approaches to service delivery and fundamentally changing relationships with local people and communities will be vital.

A number of key steps have been identified to support the work going forward that will ensure there is clarity about the scope of the enterprising council approach and will also support the development of a stronger narrative for communication with both employees, stakeholders and residents.

A review of communications across the Council has identified that there has been a gradual reduction in communications resources within the corporate communications team over recent years, including leadership capacity. This has eroded capacity and skills in some areas, only to be replaced by a more

expensive devolved communications model in services areas, which does not have the benefit of being anchored to a central plan or strategy. This has weakened the ability of Corporate Communications to play a leadership role across DCC, which is fundamental in ensuring the Council's priorities are communicated and understood by employees, partners and residents.

It is intended that the communications resources and activities identified within service departments be re-aligned into a strengthened corporate communications function. This will realise not only financial benefits but will also lead to a more strategic approach overall. Major priorities for this include strengthening the resources that go into internal communications and engagement, strengthening relationships with partnership organisations, developing greater levels of insight about Derbyshire's communities, building DCC's digital maturity and developing our capabilities around behaviour change. There is also scope to identify opportunities to raise income in a way that reduces the net cost of communications. In order to move to a one council approach to communications across the Council and realise the benefits set out above, it is proposed to create a new role of Assistant Director Communications and Customers (Grade 16) which will lead communications and customer services across the Council, reporting to the Director of OD and Policy.

Channel Shift

There are many ways (channels) that residents, service users and partners across Derbyshire access Council services and information, for example, by telephone, in person, through the Council's website and by contacting Call Derbyshire amongst others. There is currently no strategy or approach in place at DCC which would help Strategic Directors, Service Directors and Service Managers to review their own services' 'channel strategies' to ensure that each service is being delivered using the optimal combination of channels, availability and accessibility, balancing customer requirements and expectations against the cost of delivery.

Ongoing cost challenges for the council are very well documented and understood. A Channel Shift strategy, review and supporting implementation plan would potentially be able to deliver cost efficiencies by identifying our high cost, labour intensive operational processes and 'shifting' them to cheaper, self-service channels (where appropriate).

Our customers' expectations of delivery channels and their supporting service levels are increasing exponentially, as internet penetration increases and digital services are used in more and more aspects of daily life. Service received by our citizens, partners and staff is under constant scrutiny and social media brings an ability to share experiences with an immediacy and scale which was previously unimaginable. Developing our approach around Channel Shift supports the Council's ambitions to become an Enterprising Council and will bring huge benefits to the customer by making information and access to services available to customer when they want it, in the way they want it, not just arranged to suit the council and the way the council works.

In order to move the Council forward, it is intended that a council-wide Channel Shift Programme should be launched, sponsored by the Director of OD & Policy. Should the new post of Assistant Director of Communications and Customers be approved, it is proposed that the role should assume responsibility for the delivery of the programme. The scope of the programme will be to:

- Establish a programme board to review and steer progress
- Define, agree and publish DCC's Channel Strategy
- Review DCC's services against the strategy, documenting the baseline current position (which channels they currently offer, volumes, costs)
- Review and document DCC's existing channel capabilities
- Produce a decision matrix to assist departments in deciding which services should use which channels for what purpose and when
- Propose a set of projects to form the implementation of the Channel Shift programme – this is likely to include a mixture of ICT deliverables (new channels, new capabilities) and business service redesign.

The programme is intended to initially run for 2 years, before then being embedded into each department's 'business as usual' operating model as a new way of working.

It is proposed therefore that the following roles are established to support the programme.

- Grade 12 Project Manager (24 month contract) – to lead the programme and deliver the above
- Grade 9 Project Officer (x4) (12 month contracts) – one to focus on each department, to support the reviews, analysis and decision making required to deliver the programme

Reporting to the Head of Customer Services, the Project Manager will lead the development and implementation of key corporate policies and plans related to the Council's Channel Shift programme across the whole of DCC, and provide advice and support to internal and external stakeholders to effectively implement agreed Channel Shift changes across a range of different services.

The Project Officer roles will contribute to the successful delivery of the Council's Channel Shift programme, by undertaking research, analysis and interpreting data, presenting reports and information and assisting in the coordination and delivery of service specific projects including taking responsibility for part or a whole project.

Oversight of this work will be undertaken by the Customer Focus Work stream as part of the Enterprising Council approach and will also report into the ICT Governance Board.

Organisation Development and Policy Division

The Organisation Development and Policy Division was created as part of the Commissioning, Communities and Policy senior management restructure in January 2018. The structure already included the post of Head of Policy and Research and subsequently, a new post of Head of HR has been established as part of the decision to centralise HR across the Council, also reporting to the Director of OD and Policy. Should the new post of Assistant Director Communications and Customers be approved, it is proposed to rename the Head of HR to Assistant Director HR and the Head of Policy and Research to Assistant Director Strategy and Policy. The senior management structure for OD and Policy will then be finalised and is shown in Appendix 1. The structure is compliant with the Council's OD principles.

3. Financial Considerations

The cost of creating the new post of Assistant Director, Communications and Customers will be £80,000 per annum. This post will be funded from savings achieved from the re-alignment of the councils communications function. It is likely that implementing the review by re-aligning activity and resources being spent on communications could realise overall saving of between 20% -30% of current spend. A focus on income generation from communications activity outside the Council has the potential to yield around £100k within 2 years.

The costs of the new posts relating to the Channel Shift programme contained within this report will be taken from earmarked reserves for this purpose and will cost £226,000 over the two years of the programme. Early assessment of the potential financial benefits of developing the channel shift approach on a basic level of intervention could deliver ongoing annual savings of £170k savings within 2 years.

It is expected that the programme will recommend a range of projects for each department which will improve their delivery to customers and reduce costs (scale of cost reductions to be determined by the programme's review).

4. HR Considerations

The new roles have been subject to job evaluation and grading levels have been confirmed in line with the HAY job evaluation scheme the

Council's Organisational Design Principles and will enable and support service delivery.

- Assistant Director of Communications – Grade 16
- Project Manager – Grade 12
- Project Officers – Grade 9

Recruitment to the posts will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's recruitment and selection procedure. However, it is the intention to advertise these roles externally to the Council at the same time as internally, to ensure that the posts are filled as quickly as possible.

5. Legal Considerations

As contained in the report

6. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered – prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, environmental, health, property, and social value and transport considerations.

7. Key Decision

No.

8. Is it necessary to waive the call-in period?

No.

9. OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

- The Cabinet Member approves the establishment of the post of Assistant Director of Communications and Customers.
- The Cabinet Member approves the posts associated with establishing the Channel Shift programme of work.
- The Cabinet Member approves the renaming of the posts of Head of HR and Head of Policy and Research as set out in the report.

EMMA ALEXANDER
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR COMMISSIONING, COMMUNITIES
AND POLICY

