

# **Realigning the Corporate Support Team**

## **A Proposal Document for Consultation**

## **A new structure for Organisational Change**

### **Introduction**

With the ongoing delivery of the Corporate Plan for 2011 – 2014 at the heart of what we do, together with the development of our new Corporate Plan for 2014 - 2017, the City Council is looking to build on the work undertaken so far aimed at improving prosperity for the City. The quality of services received by our residents and improving the environment in which people live, work and play is of paramount importance to us as an organisation.

In achieving the aims of the Corporate Plan and the specific outcomes that lie beneath them, it is essential that the authority has a 'fit for purpose' structure that is right for a Council which has seen significant budget reductions over the last few years. High levels of performance underpin each of our aims so it is vital that we are structured appropriately to continue to improve performance across the organisation.

Stage 1 of the realignment of the Management Structure has been completed within the Chief Executive's Directorate and this consultation document sets out the proposed structure for stage 2 in the Corporate Support Team.

The proposals contained within this consultation paper focus on delivering streamlined, effective and dynamic support primarily for the Gloucester Leadership Team (GLT), but also for the Leader of the Council, Mayor and Sheriff, and will ensure that there is resilience within the Corporate Support Team as the Council moves forward.

In previous restructures much has been done to break down silo thinking and to reduce duplication. The proposals in this document, whilst being about reducing costs, are also designed to take these a step further.

### **Why is restructuring needed?**

All staff are aware of the need to make ongoing budget savings. The Council's money plan has identified areas of potential savings across a wide range of services. Members are very keen to retain front line service delivery and to minimise the impact on the services that deliver outcomes directly to residents. Previous reviews of the Corporate Support Team have focused on reducing duplication, eradicating waste and improving efficiencies in the way tasks are delivered.

However, not all of the desired outcomes have been fully realised. As such, in order to provide a high performing and supportive team that is responsive to the demands of GLT, the Leader, Mayor and Sheriff, it was concluded that the current model of support needs to be reviewed. A new structure will therefore be proposed and the role of the Corporate Support Officer and current working practices will also be reconsidered.

This will involve bringing together a set of combined skills in a cohesive and effective way to achieve the level of service needed by GLT, the Leader, Mayor and Sheriff, within a supportive and inclusive team environment.

Finally, whilst the review should be cognisant of the savings the Council needs to achieve, it is also important to ensure that there is a high performing team that is able to effectively support senior management during a time of significant change. This will need to be an ongoing focus for us for the future.

## Proposals

The first stage in this restructure looked at Realigning the Management Structure where the proposals brought appropriate services together to ensure that a step change can be delivered in new ways of working to help ongoing efficiencies and economies of scale.

Managers and their teams will be encouraged and supported to drive out functions that have 'bogged down' officers and hindered them from delivering policies and strategies that take the organisation forward.

This second stage of this review for the Corporate Support Team will see the establishment of a new organisational structure. A new structure brings with it an opportunity to review working practices and deliver the level of support that GLT etc. requires. It should be emphasised that the proposals are for consultation and the structure may be revised as a result of the consultation feedback.

Within this consultation document there is a chart showing the structure for the Corporate Support Team including the proposals around the retention of the current reporting arrangements.

It should again be emphasised that these proposals are for consultation, and as such final structures and roles may be revised as a result of consultation feedback. We will look to recruit to these posts internally wherever possible.

In summary, the current structure needs further re-alignment in terms of both shape and size, in order to meet the future challenges, as well as realising the ambitions for Gloucester.

The key outcomes aimed to be achieved by this restructure are;

- Within the context of ongoing budgetary pressure, we must ensure that we achieve high value in all our activities and dealings, removing unnecessary cost and continually reviewing what we need to do and how we do it to remain cost effective
- A more streamlined service focused on supporting the delivery of the leadership team's priorities and the Council's civic functions in a co-ordinated and joined up way
- Recognising and realising further opportunities for shared services and efficiency gains through a structure that can facilitate this, allowing effective sharing of work and resources
- It is 'non-negotiable' that we continue to focus on agreed objectives, drive performance upwards and achieve results
- As a publicly funded organisation we need to demonstrate high standards of behaviours, develop the appropriate skills and competencies and remain professional at all times when delivering our agenda
- We need to continue to be a creative, flexible and learning organisation so that we can respond promptly and effectively to external pressures - and to any opportunities.

## The next steps

This document focuses on the Corporate Support Team. Where appropriate, new job descriptions will be developed and evaluated, using the Hay Job Evaluation Scheme.

## **Proposed Structures**

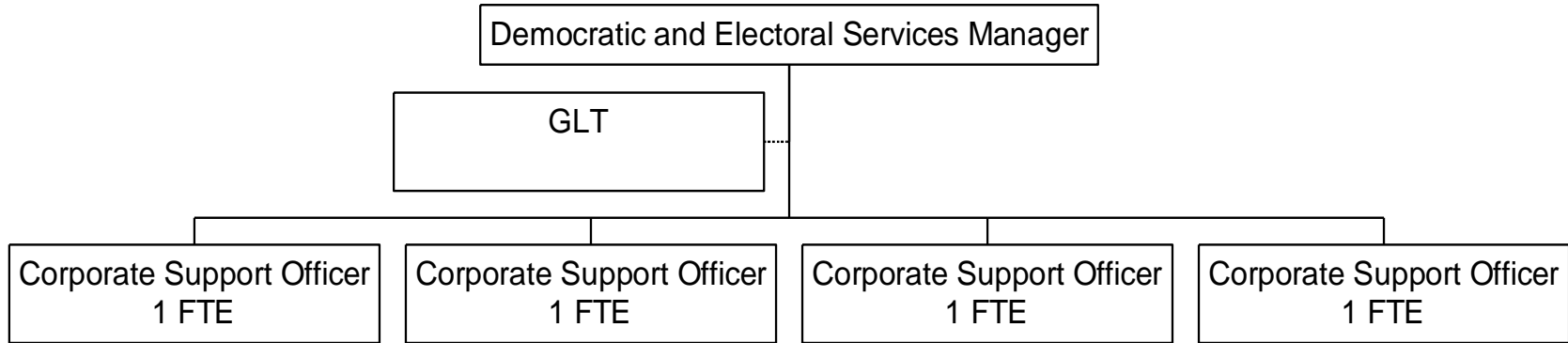
The rest of this document details the proposed structures and rationale behind the changes being proposed, together with the timetable for consultation and implementation.

Appendix 1 provides the rationale for the proposed changes within the Corporate Support Team.

Appendix 2 lists the proposed staff changes within the Corporate Support Team.

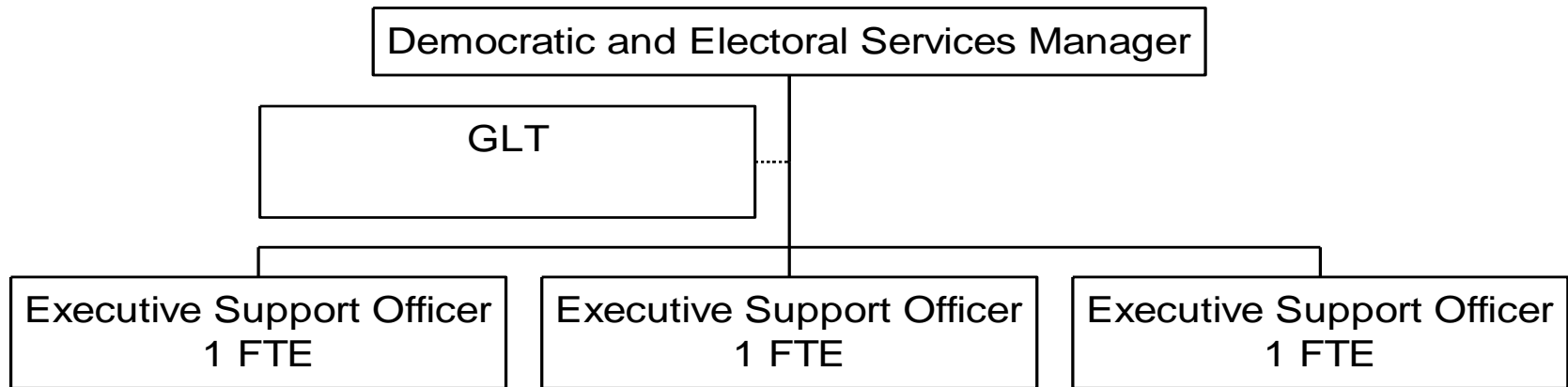
All staff affected by these changes are encouraged to respond to the proposals, whether individually or as a team.

**Current Structure for the Corporate Support Team**



Nb The current establishment includes 2 part-time posts

**Proposed Structure for the Executive Support Team**



Nb Part-time or job-share arrangements will be considered

## **Overview of the Process**

### **General support**

Any reorganisation can be distressing for those involved and for their colleagues so it is recognised that it will be a difficult time for staff.

HR support throughout the process will be provided by Ruth Aldridge and Ashley Gough. Support of a more general nature will also be provided by Penny Williams, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager, Sue Mullins, Head of Legal and Policy Development, and members of GLT.

Our aim at all times will be to provide clear and timely information for everyone involved and to maintain a close and open dialogue with the Trade Unions throughout.

### **Assimilation**

In line with the Council's Organisational Change policy, where all of the following conditions apply, current post holders will be directly assimilated to the equivalent position in the new structure:

- the job is essentially the same (at least a 60% match), and
- the grade is the same, and
- the numbers of posts available is the same or greater than the number of current post holders.

### **Ring-fence competition**

In line with the Council's Organisational Change policy, employees who do not secure a position in the new structure via direct assimilation will be included in a ring-fence if:

- their posts are deleted, and
- an alternative position or positions are introduced, and
- the employee's grade is the same (or one above / below) as the grade of the new post(s) *or* the employee is at the management tier appropriate to the new post(s).

### **Redeployment**

Any employee who does not secure a post in the new structure or an ongoing position through transfer, change of working arrangements etc will be given notice of redundancy and simultaneously placed on the redeployment register for the period of their notice.

### **Selection process**

There will be a consistent, robust recruitment and selection process for the new posts.

### **Appeals**

Guidance on how to appeal against any stage of this process can be found in the Council's Organisational Change Document that is available from HR.

## Implications for those affected

We fully appreciate the challenging nature of this process, the anxiety and the uncertainty that may be felt by staff. It is important that we provide help and support throughout this period of change, particularly to those who are directly affected.

If any staff would like to be considered for voluntary redundancy or early retirement they should contact Ruth Aldridge or Ashley Gough for an informal discussion.

The Council's free, confidential and external counselling service can be contacted on 01452 750586.

## Timetable

Consultation with GLT	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2014
Consultation with Staff	22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2014
Trade Union consultation	Ongoing from 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2014
Close of consultation	19 <sup>th</sup> February 2014
Employee Forum / OD Committee	TBC
Formation of new team	TBC

## How to respond

Please send your comments or questions to:

Penny Williams  
Democratic and Electoral Services Manager  
[penny.williams@gloucester.go.uk](mailto:penny.williams@gloucester.go.uk)  
Internal post : 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Kimberley Warehouse

## **Appendix 1**

### **Rationale for changes within the Corporate Support Team**

The Corporate Support Officers provide a full range of high-level secretarial and administrative support services to GLT, the Leader of the Council, the Mayor and Sheriff.

The tasks the Team provide are very varied and range in complexity. In addition to this they support the Mayor and Sheriff in managing invitations and their diaries and they organise a number of major civic events. The Team also supports the Leader of the Council with diary management etc and liaises with the Mayor's Steward in connection with civic duties.

Following the restructure of the Corporate Support Team undertaken approximately two years ago, the full time post of Mayor's Secretary was deleted and the role and responsibilities of this post were absorbed by the wider Corporate Support Team. Much has been done to develop more efficient processes for support of the Civic function and it is anticipated that further efficiencies can be achieved through improved ways of working and shared responsibilities across the Team.

The recent Realignment of the Management Structure has reduced the size of GLT to 3, with the functions of the previous post of Corporate Director of Regeneration being absorbed across the remainder of GLT and in the Head of Regeneration post. At the time of this realignment, there was no reduction in the number of Corporate Support Officer posts.

The Corporate Support Officers are currently managed by the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager and it is proposed that this continues to enable achievement of a consistent approach in service delivery across the Team.

It is proposed that the Corporate Support Team should be renamed the Executive Support Team. This is intended to more clearly identify Team members and the role that they play within the organisation.

It is also proposed that the Executive Support Team should consist of 3 FTE Executive Support Officers. The roles and responsibilities of the Executive Support Officers will be generic and will be reviewed to ensure that all staff are able to provide a consistent and effective level of support to all members of the leadership team, Mayor and Sheriff as required.

Work will be allocated on a shared responsibility basis, either by GLT etc. directly, or via the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager, as appropriate. This will enable the Council to ensure balanced workloads and the opportunity for all Team members to develop in the role, whilst providing the level and quality of support required.



## Appendix 2 - Staff Changes

The following indicates how the proposals will affect individuals:

Corporate Support Officer	Post deleted and included in ring fence for Executive Support Officer
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