

Gloucester City Council

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| Meeting: | Special Organisational Development Committee | Date: | 25 November 2015 |
| Subject: | Realignment of Environmental Planning & Neighbourhood Management Services | | |
| Report Of: | Head of Neighbourhood Services | | |
| Wards Affected: | All | | |
| Key Decision: | No | Budget/Policy Framework: | No |
| Contact Officer: | Lloyd Griffiths, Head of Neighbourhood Services | | |
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| Appendices: | 1. Consultation Document (Original) | | |
| | 2. Consultation Feedback (with comments provided by The Head of Neighbourhood Services) | | |
| | 3. Final Structure Proposal | | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to propose a new Neighbourhood Management Service that realigns the existing Environmental Planning and Neighbourhood Management Teams.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Organisational Development Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that the proposal to re-align the Environmental Planning and Neighbourhood Management Services as outlined in Appendix 3 is approved for implementation.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Proposals to re-align the Environmental Planning and Neighbourhood Management Services were presented to staff and Trades Unions through a formal consultation process that commenced on the 12th October 2015 and concluded on the 26th October 2015. The Consultation Report was also presented to the Trade Union Consultation meeting on the 19th October 2015 and the Employee Forum on the 21st October 2015.
- 3.2 The initial driver for this re-alignment was a savings target of £100,000 attached to the Environmental Planning Service. It soon became evident however that the synergies that existed between the two teams, particularly around the management and enhancement of our parks and open spaces and the regular liaison with AMEY our Streetcare Partner, meant that a 'joining up' of these services had the potential to deliver both service improvements and efficiency gains.

3.3 A number of comments were received from staff during the consultation period with no underlying opposition to the structure proposal. Furthermore no alternative proposals were submitted by staff for consideration. All comments were considered at length by The Head of Neighbourhood Services and responses were provided to officers through team meetings and in the form of an anonymised table of comments/feedback which is included at Appendix 2 and was e-mailed to staff.

3.5 After reviewing all information received no changes are proposed to the structure as detailed in the original consultation document which is included at Appendix 1.

4.0 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

4.1 ABCD and its principles provide very real opportunities for the new service this proposal intends to create. Across the Country there are numerous examples of where community groups through a real interest and passion in sites such as parks and open spaces, have taken on responsibility for such sites with positive results. It is important that officers consider themselves as facilitators as much as they do deliverers and this is an area that will be focussed on throughout 2016.

5.0 Alternative Options Considered

5.1 A number of options were discussed whilst developing the consultation proposal and these were discussed by the Senior Management Team. These options mainly centred around the level of supervisory capacity within the structure and to achieve this in the most cost effective way, The Head of Neighbourhood Service has direct responsibility for The Environmental Projects Team.

5.2 No alternative structure proposals were submitted by staff during the consultation period.

6.0 Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 The proposal re-aligns two services that have very clear links around areas such as parks and open spaces, grounds maintenance and subsequent monitoring of the AMEY contract. These areas of work can be developed positively moving forward.

6.2 The proposal will lead to full year savings of £105,000 being achieved whilst at the same time drawing together officers that can maximise our outcomes in important front line areas such as parks and open spaces, grounds maintenance and streetscene.

6.3 After detailed consideration of the feedback provided, and in the absence of alternative structure proposals being submitted by staff, no amendments are deemed necessary to the original proposal.

7.0 Future Work and Conclusions

7.1 Subject to approval, it is the intention to implement this new structure during early January 2016. To achieve this will require the Environmental Coordinators Post to be deleted and this process to be managed sensitively during the remainder of November and into December. Furthermore a competitive recruitment process will

be arranged for early December in respect of the Neighbourhood Manager Posts and opportunities for re-deployment to be investigated as a first course of action.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 The levels of proposed full year savings attached to this proposal have been set out in the table below –

| Item | Description | Cost / Saving |
|------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| A | Current Service Employee Budget | £561,050 |
| B | Total Proposed Employee Budget | £501,575 |
| C | Initial Savings | £59,475 |
| | | |
| D | Additional Budget (via Income) | £46,000 |
| F | Total Savings (C+D) | £105,475 |

Note: Savings reduced by £10k in Year 1 due to transition arrangements relating to allotment maintenance

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 There are no legal implications associated with this proposal, other than redundancy and redeployment matters for which support from Human Resources is being provided via a Change Agent.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

10.1 The following risk and opportunities have been identified in respect of this proposal:

| Risks | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| Placing officers with planning responsibilities in a neighbourhood team will diminish planning links. Roles and responsibilities to be reinforced and officer location to be considered | To bring together two teams that have synergies around parks & open spaces, grounds maintenance and contract monitoring |
| | Improve contract management in areas such arboriculture and maintenance of adopted land |
| | To develop ABCD in areas such as parks and open spaces and grounds maintenance. |

11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

11.1 An initial screening assessment has been undertaken and no negative impacts have been identified.

12.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

12.1 No community safety implications.

Sustainability

12.2 No sustainability implications.

Staffing & Trade Union

12.3 This proposal was shared in writing with Trade Unions (UNISON, UNITE and GMB) on 9th September. Furthermore the proposal was presented to a Trade Union meeting on 19th October 2015 and an Employee Forum on 21st October 2015. Comments were received from UNISON in respect of the proposal and after consideration no changes were considered necessary. UNISON were written to on 5th November 2015 in respect of their comments and with confirmation on the outcome of the consultation process.

Press Release Drafted/Approved

12.4 Not applicable

Background Documents: None