

**REPORT TO Executive**

**Date of Meeting: 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

**Report of: Corporate Manager, Democratic & Civic Support**

**Title: REVIEW OF STAFFING – DEMOCRATIC & CIVIC SUPPORT**

**Is this a Key Decision?**

No

**Is this an Executive or Council Function?**

**Executive**

**1.1 What is the report about?**

1.1 This report provides a business case which examines the need to increase the staffing provision within both the Democratic Services (Committees) and Mayoralty teams to ensure that the services provided by both teams can be delivered in the most effective and efficient way.

**2. Recommendations:**

2.1 That Council be RECOMMENDED that

2.1.1 Two new posts be added to the Council's establishment as identified within the report; and

2.1.2 The Council's budget be adjusted accordingly.

**3. Reasons for the recommendation:**

3.1 The reasons are set out in the business case as detailed in paragraph 8 this report.

**4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.**

4.1 The costs attributable to the additional posts (including on-costs) are:-

- Democratic Services Officer (Grade 8)	£36,652
- Administrative Assistant (Part time (0.68fte) Grade 4)	£14,772
TOTAL	£51,424

**5. Section 151 Officer comments:**

5.1 The financial implications contained in this report are noted. If approved, the budget will be adjusted accordingly.

**6. What are the legal aspects?**

6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this proposal.

**7. Monitoring Officer's comments:**

7.1 Provided that a fair and transparent process is followed, this report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

## **8. Report details:**

- 8.1 As part of the review of services over the last 5 years, both the Democratic Services and Mayoralty Teams have been restructured resulting in a reduction in the number of staff in both teams.
- 8.2 The Democratic Services Team was reduced by 0.68fte of Administrative Assistant on the resignation of a previous postholder, as well as 0.2fte following the redundancy of the previous manager, and subsequent creation of a Scrutiny Programme Officer.
- 8.3 The Mayoralty Team's Administrative Assistant took on the work previously undertaken by the Admin Assistant post in the Democratic Services Team (above) – this reduced the amount of time it was available to assist with Mayoralty functions and Guildhall bookings.
- 8.4 Due to the sharing of the Administrative Assistant post, the teams now share an office.
- 8.5 A copy of the current structure chart showing these two teams is attached as Appendix A.

## **RATIONALE FOR CHANGE**

In the main, the above arrangements have worked well especially due to the personalities involved in both teams, and goodwill of those involved.

However, over the last two years the following have occurred:-

- The following additional meetings have been created, all of which need servicing (preparation of agenda, attendance at meetings, and the taking of minutes):-
  - o Exeter Health & Well Being Board
  - o Exeter Board (and Exeter Board Sub Funding Group)
  - o Strata Joint Executive and Joint Scrutiny Committees
  - o Licensing Sub Committee – Premises Licences Applications
  - o Leisure Complex & Bus Station Programme Board (and associated Steering Groups)
  - o Joint Consultation & Negotiation Committee
  - o Mobile Homes Residents' Forum
  - o Community Engagement Officer Group
- It is anticipated that the following additional demands will be placed on the team in the next 6-12 months:-
  - o HRA management Board
  - o South Street Development Programme Board (and possible sub groups)
  - o Meetings associated with and arising from the Heart of the South West Devolution submission
  - o Servicing of Disciplinary Hearings (currently undertaken by HR)
- An increase in demands placed on the Democratic Services Team associated with the introduction of iPad for Members

- The award of the Member Development Charter to the Council and an increase in demand for training and induction for Members;
- A centralisation of all travel and training arrangements for Members, to be within this team (rather than previously scattered around the authority)
- An increase in Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups (although the majority of this work is undertaken by the dedicated part time Scrutiny Programme Officer).
- An increase in private hire bookings (including weddings) of the Guildhall (as shown below);

#### **Guildhall Private Bookings and Weddings**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Private bookings</b>	<b>Weddings</b>
2011	53	1
2012	44	3
2013	65	7
2014	62	8
2015	96	13
2016 (to 28/06/16)	43	11
2017	4	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>45</b>

- Total income these have generated equates to £61,000
- An increase in Mayoralty functions being undertaken (as shown below);

#### **Lord Mayor & Deputy Lord Mayor Events – MAYORAL YEAR**

2011/2012	333
2012/2013	418
2013/2014	380
2014/2015	487
2015/2016	474

- A greater involvement by the Lord Mayor's Support Officer in the organisation of events

#### **PROPOSED NEW STRUCTURE**

The proposed new structure is attached as Appendix B

#### **RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED NEW STRUCTURE**

The new structure includes the following:-

- An additional Democratic Services Officer (Grade 8) will assist with the increase in the workload identified above so as to give a consistent approach to all of the additional meetings being encountered. It will also allow for any future requests for additional meetings (as suggested above) to be accommodated within the team. It is therefore suggested that Exeter takes the lead in the servicing of all meetings of a joint nature. This will ensure that there is a consistent approach across all such meetings.

- Finally, it is also suggested that the Democratic Services Team take over responsibility for the note taking at any Disciplinary Hearings (currently undertaken by HR Business Partners);
- An additional part time (25 hours per week) Administrative Assistant (Grade 4) in the Democratic Services Team will ensure that the majority of associated administrative work is undertaken at an appropriate level, within that team, rather than via the Democratic Services Officers themselves (Grade 8)
- The consolidation of a full time Administrative Assistant (Grade 4) in the Mayoralty Team (rather than being split between the two teams). This will relieve the pressure on the Lord Mayor's Support Officer, as well as allowing more time to be spent on the private bookings of the Guildhall, including the promotion of such as a venue for hire.

## **9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**

9.1 The proposed additions to these two teams will allow:-

- The decision making process of the authority, as well as those of Joint Committees and any combined authority arrangements in which the City Council is involved, to be consistently delivered;
- The increasing use of the Guildhall for private bookings to effectively administered, as well as giving the opportunity to expand this further via appropriate marketing and increase potential revenue from such bookings.

## **10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

10.1 There is an ever increasing demand being put on both of these services. Without adequate and appropriate resources being available, the Council may fail in its responsibility to ensure that all decisions are taken in accordance with the law and internal policies and procedures. The lack of appropriate resources for the Mayoralty team may lead to a loss of income generating opportunities. In both cases, the lack of appropriate resources may also lead to a deterioration of the current standards and loss of reputation.

## **11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?**

11.1 None applicable with this decision

## **12. Are there any other options?**

12.1 These services have, for a number of years, worked within reduced resources following previous reviews as part of the Council's budget reduction exercise. If these proposals were not approved, a greater degree of prioritisation of requests would need to be undertaken which would lead to a lack of consistency in approach, as well as reduced income generating opportunities.

**John Street**  
**Corporate Manager, Democratic & Civic Support**

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**  
**Background papers used in compiling this report:-**

Contact for enquires:  
Democratic Services (Committees)  
Room 2.3  
01392 265275