

Report to: Council



Date of Meeting 28th April 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Learning review

Report summary:

To request a budget for external support into the learning review of the circumstances surrounding the redundancy of the Strategic Lead Organisational Development and Transformation.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That Council approve a budget of £18,150 (exc VAT) and an exemption to contract standing orders to enable the East of England Local Government Association to be appointed to assist in carrying out the learning review.

Reason for recommendation:

At the Extraordinary Council meeting of 9th February 2021, which confirmed the redundancy of the Strategic Lead Organisational Development and Transformation, the Council also resolved as follows;

'this Council agrees that given the serious matters raised by this report, the Portfolio Holder for Council & Corporate Co-ordination should expeditiously and with the assistance of the relevant SMT officer, provide a detailed report for the Scrutiny Committee to consider all matters associated with the employment status of the Strategic Lead (Organisational Development & Transformation) as referenced in the report "Resolving an employment matter" considered at this meeting. The report will cover the period from at least 1 January 2020, and it will provide a full detailed account of all matters that have led to this meeting's deliberations.'

The Portfolio Holder and Monitoring Officer have been in discussion and also liaison with outside bodies with a view to securing external support to this process given the sensitivity of the issues raised. The East of England Local Government Association have been recommended and following discussion with them and an initial review of the some of the detail, they have confirmed their willingness to assist and have provided a proposal that both the Portfolio Holder and Monitoring Officer are happy with. In broad terms the proposal covers;

EELGA proposes that a learning review approach is undertaken in relation to the issues experienced at the council. A learning review is a structured approach to identifying root causes of issues that have led to unhelpful or unintended outcomes. It is designed to identify at corporate, departmental, team or individual level the in/actions or collection of in/actions which have led to issues identified or complained of by one or more individuals.

The purpose of such a review is to identify what could or should be done to prevent a recurrence of said issues. Unlike an investigation it is not intended to apportion blame or recommend any particular formal sanction for those involved. Taking the learning review approach allows participants to reflect on their own contribution and that of others in order to fully appreciate how

the situation may have been approached differently to achieve a more favourable outcome or how this could be done in future.

Once the review has been completed an analysis is provided with a report containing recommendations at a corporate, departmental, team and individual level to develop and implement improvements to policy, process, and practice. The review will commence with an initial document review of information related to the redundancy exercise, this will include, policy and processes as set out by the authority and any reports, emails or other documents related to the events to be reviewed.

The fee proposed is £18,150 (exc VAT) and while this not an insignificant sum, it is expected that it will not be as high as this as there is a contingency sum included and also it is considered that the amount of time allocated for conducting interviews is probably over cautious. The rate is based on being a member of the LGA and therefore is preferential. Our contract standing orders would normally require quotes to be obtained from three suppliers but it is considered appropriate not to do that in this case and to use the EELGA given their experience in this area and in local government in particular and as they were recommended as an appropriate body to assist.

Officer: Henry Gordon Lennox, Monitoring Officer

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergencies
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information [9th February 2021 Council Minutes](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

Financial implications:

A supplementary budget is being requested of £18,150 for Council to approve, this will be met from the General Fund Balance. Members should also note the request for an exemption to Contract Standing Orders.

Legal implications:

It is permissible for an exemption to contract standing orders to be granted given the sum involved. Otherwise there are no legal implications requiring comment.