

Agenda item 7

For decision – to increase responsibilities of the Oversight Committee on staff matters

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Summary

This report was originally presented at the Council meeting on 2 October 2024. I was asked to refine the process of decision making when staff posts become vacant. My recommendation for this is in section 3. The other original recommendations remain unchanged.

At the September meeting there was a discussion about which HR decisions should come to Oversight Committee and which should come to Council. This report proposes to amend Standing Orders to extent the remit of the Oversight Committee accordingly

Currently, Standing Orders says that Oversight Committee is responsible for *“All aspects related to human resources beyond the remit of the Council and the Town Clerk.”* Council retains control of the organisation chart, which is approved annually and receives proposals for new posts (that alter the organisation chart) through the year. This retains a Council overview of staffing and control of the overall staff budget. The Town Clerk is responsible for recruitment and management of staff.

The discussion in September questioned whether in year changes to the staff body really needed to be a Council decision and whether they are best placed to be considered by Oversight Committee where more time for consideration would be available.

The proposals in red below are to amend Standing Orders:

1. In section 16 ‘Terms of reference of the Oversight Committee’ (p16)

*1.viii All aspects related to human resources (both paid staff and volunteers) beyond the remit of the Council and the Town Clerk, including changes to the organisation chart so long as these are within the overall staff budget, ....*

This will allow more flexibility and ease of decision making for changes within the staffing body and within the overall staff budget. However, if a recruitment proposal, or an amendment to an existing job role, resulted in the overall staff budget being exceeded, Council would still have the final decision.

2. In section 9 ‘Matters that must be resolved only by Council’ (p12)

*1.i Agreeing the Strategic Plan, the annual work programme, staff management structure organisation chart showing post titles and grades, and the annual budget*

This change would enable Oversight Committee to focus more on the detail while Council would retain strategic control of the staff management structure and the overall staff budget.

By making these amendments a change of wording is required for the Proper Officer (Town Clerk)

3. In section 22 Proper Officer' (p20)

point 3. *The Proper Officer shall.....:*

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.  
*xviii . have overall managerial responsibility for staff recruitment (including the drafting of job descriptions) and management, while alterations to the corporate ~~management staff~~ structure will be the Council's responsibility and changes to individual staff grading will be the Oversight Committee's responsibility*

also, a new point has been added at number 19. *The Proper Officer shall.....:*

*consult with the Leader and Chair of Oversight Committee about next steps when staff posts become vacant*

When staff posts become vacant, there is always consideration for how and if the vacancy is filled. This addition to the standing orders would bring a further robustness to the process to ensure that we continue to have the right staff to effectively deliver the work programme.

4. One final amendment is to include the 'community engagement and partnership' area of the work programme under the terms of reference of the Oversight Committee. This will mean an even distribution of areas of the work programme to be discussed at both Council and Oversight Committee meetings.

A new point, x, is proposed to be added to section 16 'Terms of reference of the Oversight Committee' (p17):

*x All aspects of community engagement and participation including organisational support and the Welcome Hub*

Recommendation

Approve the changes to the Standing Orders to extend the remit of the Oversight Committee