

Agenda item 7

For decision – Proposed review of management structure

Authors: Cllr Fiona Barrows, Leader and Chair and Peter Wheelhouse, Town Clerk

Summary (incl. recommendations)

To delegate authority to the Town Clerk to:

1. Appoint Council HR & Governance Support to undertake an independent external evaluation of the Council's management structure at a cost of up to £4,300 to be funded by projected underspends on the 26/27 staff budget
2. Work with the Improvement Advisory Group to develop costed recommendations to be presented to a future meeting of Council

Background

Now that the new Town Clerk is in place and there is clarity around the Council's strategic objectives and work programme, it seems an appropriate time to consider whether the current management structure of the Council is fit for purpose. In particular, it is important to review whether that structure is aligned with the Council Plan and whether there is management resource where it is needed to deliver on our strategic objectives.

Some other points are worthy of note:

- **Number of line management reports** - it was considered that for the Acting Town Clerk to have seven line management reports was an expedient interim measure but was unlikely to be sustainable over a longer period. It is indeed unusual to see this kind of structure within the size of organisation that FTC has become.
- **Deputy Town Clerk** – with the promotion of the former Deputy to the position of Town Clerk, the question arises as to whether to fill this vacancy or put in place some other arrangement that would enable the Proper Officer duties to be performed when the Town Clerk is absent.
- **Economic development capacity** - the Deputy also held the position of Economic Development & Regeneration Manager and given the importance of the Vibrant Economy aim within the Council Plan, it is important to consider whether this vacancy needs to be filled or some other approach would better serve the needs of the Council
- **Capacity of the Management Team to undertake strategic work** – as the organisation has grown in recent years, so the demands on managers have grown especially in terms of the strategic work that they are expected to do. It is important to consider whether managers have sufficient capacity to undertake this increasingly strategic work

A proposal to conduct a review of the Council's management structure

Other councils in the sector have approached similar issues by engaging independent external expertise. Council HR & Governance Support (CHRGs) who successfully managed our recent Town Clerk recruitment process have conducted 40 plus management team reviews which

have been adopted and successfully implemented by the local councils that engaged them. Not only are they experienced in evaluating staff structures but also have knowledge of what FTC is trying to achieve having managed that recent recruitment process.

The proposal is to engage CHRGS to undertake an independent review of FTC's management structure. CHRGS would work closely with the Improvement Advisory Group who would develop recommendations for consideration at a future Council meeting.

The methodology used by CHRGS would include a mix of:

- desk top analysis of relevant documents e.g. staff structure, job descriptions, pay scales and salaries, Council Plan, work programme and budget information
- questionnaire surveys and face to face meetings with relevant staff and members of the Improvement Advisory Group (IAG)
- the development of costed options in consultation with the IAG.

Other options considered

None

Key considerations for the Council

To ensure that the management structure is fit for purpose

Consultation and feedback

This proposal has been discussed with members of the Management Team and IAG

Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan

Aim 5 – to be a bold and effective council

Financial and Risk Implications

The cost of the engagement of CHRGS is estimated to be £4,300 + VAT

Legal / HR Implications

The proposed exercise is designed to ensure that the Council can continue to comply with its legal obligations

Equalities Implications

This proposed exercise would be conducted in line with the Council's equality commitments and relevant employment legislation.

Community Safety Implications

None

Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

None

Health and Safety Implications

None

Constitutional Requirements

None

Background Papers

None

Report Sign-Off

Peter Wheelhouse, Town Clerk & Fiona Barrows, Leader and Chair of Frome Town Council

16/04/26

Recommendations

To delegate authority to the Town Clerk to:

1. Appoint Council HR & Governance Support to undertake an independent external evaluation of the Council's management structure at a cost of up to £4,300 to be funded by projected underspends on the 26/27 staff budget
2. Work with the Improvement Advisory Group to develop costed recommendations to be presented to a future meeting of Council