

## **COUNCIL**

**25 APRIL 2013**

### **DEPUTY DIRECTOR DESIGNATIONS**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rodney Chambers, Leader  
Report from: Neil Davies, Chief Executive  
Author: Neil Davies, Chief Executive

#### **Summary**

This report seeks Council approval for the creation of two deputy director posts, one in children and adults services and the second in the regeneration, community and culture directorate.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

1.1 A change to the senior management structure of the Council is a matter that is customarily presented to and discussed at Council. This accords with the constitution which states that all senior management appointments above assistant director level should be approved by Members.

#### **2. Background**

2.1 The Council has operated a two directorate structure for some years, essentially organised around people and place. When embarking on this approach some five years ago there were only four local authorities that had implemented similar senior management arrangements. It is understood that there are now approximately 50 councils that have equivalent senior management structures with others contemplating similar changes in the near future.

2.2 Predominantly this lean structure has supported the Council well, helping to create a more cohesive organisation with clearer accountabilities and simplified transitions between services. In addition it has also generated important on-going revenue savings in an era where local authority formula funding has reduced quite considerably - some 28% over the duration of the most recent spending review period.

2.3 As with any model of service delivery, it is important to undertake some form of periodic review to assess the benefits associated with such an approach. For reasons explained later in the report, this analysis suggests that there is

some merit in refining our senior management structure with the creation of two deputy director posts, one in each of the service directorates.

### **3. Advice and analysis**

- 3.1 The proposal contained in this report is that the current assistant director roles for adult social care and customer first, leisure, culture, democracy and governance be re-designated as deputy director roles supporting the director of children and adults (C & A) services, and the director of regeneration, community and culture (RCC), respectively. For the new deputy director position in the children and adults, this will require certain additional services being added to the current assistant director role; these are explained more fully in the paragraphs below. For the new RCC deputy director position, no substantial changes are proposed to the old assistant director role, as it already has a wide and comprehensive remit. Furthermore, for this latter position, it is proposed that the current matrix management arrangements (pertaining to the business support aspects of the old assistant director role) should continue, as they are not considered problematic or indeed a barrier to this proposed change.
- 3.2 As indicated earlier, Medway Council has a very slim senior management structure compared to many other local authorities. A consequence of this is that the two directors each have a large portfolio of services and activities. First, it is necessary to highlight the rationale for proposing this change. One of the compelling reasons supporting this proposal is the important, additional capacity that can be created, by sharing and delegating aspects of the directors' roles. To provide an example – due to their seniority and status, a not insignificant proportion of directors' time is devoted to simply representing the Council in strategic discussions with stakeholders, partners and other Government agencies. Establishing two deputy director roles will offer greater resilience and capacity, enabling this responsibility to be shared with other senior colleagues. In this context, there is a knock-on beneficial impact, since it also provides an opportunity for other willing and ambitious officers, lower in the management structure, to enjoy similar exposure to more senior managerial and leadership experiences. Both directors will enjoy additional support offering greater resilience and capacity to undertake senior management tasks.
- 3.3 Creating a deputy role in children and adults services warrants particular comment. For the next year or so there will be intense and focused effort to deliver the actions identified in the child protection and safeguarding improvement plan. The director of children and adults services will have an integral role in overseeing and delivering these improvements. Establishing additional senior capacity to assist with managing the directorate more broadly, has clear and distinct benefits supporting this aim; essentially creating the right conditions that will give us greater scope and a better opportunity to realise the outcomes underpinning the improvement plan. In addition, such a change is likely to be welcomed by the Department for Education's (DfE) improvement team, who are required to monitor progress on the improvement plan. The DfE is likely to see this as a strong statement and clear commitment that the Council will devote as much resource and capacity as necessary to improve child protection and safeguarding services.

- 3.4 This point is further emphasized since it is also proposed that the independent reviewing officer (IRO) service, currently residing in the business support department is transferred to children and adults services. Whilst recognising the good work that had been undertaken, the recent Ofsted report made a number of recommendations regarding changes to the IRO service, and it is considered that these can best be implemented by re-location in the children and adults directorate under the direct responsibility of the deputy director. With this proposal, the essential tenet of independent review and audit will be retained, but there will be more direct support from both the director and deputy director of children and adults services to take forward the service improvements. It is also proposed that the new deputy director role has responsibility for supporting the Medway safeguarding children's board, enjoying the benefits of synergy since one of the current responsibilities of the assistant director adult social care – the post being re-designated – involves acting as lead and supporting the adults safeguarding board.
- 3.5 For the RCC deputy director role, the re-designation of the current post (assistant director customer first, leisure, culture, democracy and governance) is recommended since the position already enjoys important seniority - membership of the corporate management team, as well as wide cross organisational duties and responsibilities. This remit has already necessitated deputising for the director and indeed the chief executive at key external meetings and events. In recent years, this assistant director post has been created by combining a number of former assistant director roles, hence the wide ranging focus. Consequently, it is proposed that it should be recognised more formally with deputy director status.
- 3.6 Establishing a more explicit career structure for senior staff and recognising the need for more effective succession planning are also significant benefits associated with this change. The two directorate model, with a lean structure, is inevitably represented by a flat hierarchy, with reduced senior management layers, and therefore more limited opportunities for career progression. Perhaps in a more modest way, without incurring significant additional on-going revenue costs, this structure offers clearer progression opportunities, which is likely to encourage key staff to remain at Medway sometime longer. In the main, it essentially retains all of the advantageous features of the two directorate model, but with the benefit of succession planning and career development.
- 3.7 It is necessary to comment on the implications for the business support department. The Council took a decision a number of years ago to delete the post of director of finance and corporate services, which was also the deputy chief executive role. Rather, a number of the responsibilities incorporated in this post were subsumed in the chief executive role, with the residual elements shared amongst the current assistant directors in business support. However, in reality, this was not an even allocation across the business support assistant directors as the bulk of the additional responsibilities were assigned to the chief finance officer. As Members will be aware, the chief finance officer is also the designated section 151 officer with statutory financial responsibilities. To all intents and purposes the chief finance officer has acted primus inter pares in recent years, and has been the unofficial deputy in the business support department. As part of the changes therefore it is also proposed that the chief finance officer is more formally recognised as

the deputy in the business support department, but this does not warrant a re-designation to the title of this post.

- 3.8 Finally, and perhaps as a more general point, this proposal will enable the Council to recognise in a more formal way, the broader roles undertaken by certain assistant directors. It gives the opportunity to ensure there is a fair balance of responsibility, justifying the increased status associated with the deputy director role. As explained immediately above this principle equally applies to the chief finance officer position.
- 3.9 For completeness details of both the existing and proposed structures are contained as an appendix to this report.

#### **4 Risk management**

- 4.1 It is necessary for the Council to approve and implement a senior management structure that enables its statutory responsibilities and Member priorities to be delivered effectively. Refining the corporate management structure as proposed in this report, augments the two directorate model with greater resilience but it also establishes a clearer path for progression and succession planning.

#### **5 Financial, human resource and legal implications**

- 5.1 Whilst there are some additional responsibilities attributable to the children and adult services deputy director role, this proposal essentially entails re-designating two assistant director posts as deputy directors. As far as the staff structure and establishment is concerned, the old assistant director posts will simply be re-titled as deputy directors.
- 5.2 Since each of the current assistant director incumbents fulfil more than 70% of the new deputy director roles, they are automatically entitled to be slotted in to these new positions. There are no other significant human resources implications associated with this change.
- 5.3 Creating two new deputy director posts essentially by re-designating two existing two assistant director roles means that the costs associated with this change are less significant. Accordingly, it is estimated that the costs will not exceed £22,000 (including employer's on-costs), which can be managed within existing approved revenue budgets.
- 5.4 From a legal stance, the Council is required to establish a senior management structure that enables it to fulfil its statutory responsibilities, as well as implement the key aims and priorities of elected Members. For the reasons specified in the report, the proposed changes should enable this to be achieved more effectively.
- 5.5 Where appropriate the scheme of delegation will be reviewed and changed. However, since this is strictly within the realm of officer decision making and will entail changing one officer delegation to another, it is not considered problematic. If the proposal is approved, where appropriate other constitutional changes, specifically reflecting the IRO transfer to children and adults services, will similarly be implemented.

## **6. Recommendations**

- 6.1 That Council approves the creation of two new deputy director roles, as detailed above in the body of the report.
- 6.2 Council is asked to agree the budget transfer between business support and children and adults services to reflect the movement of the IRO service.

### **Lead officer contact**

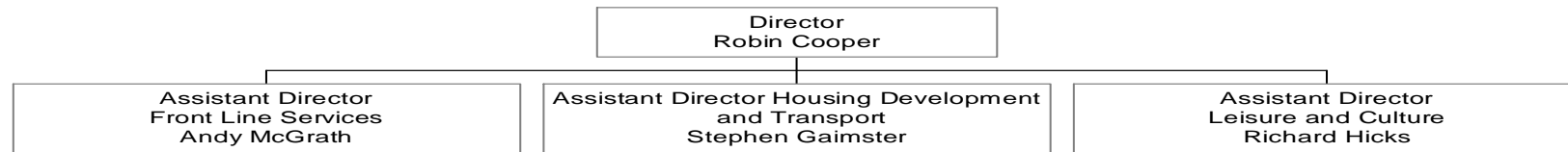
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### **Background papers**

None



## Regeneration, Community and Culture

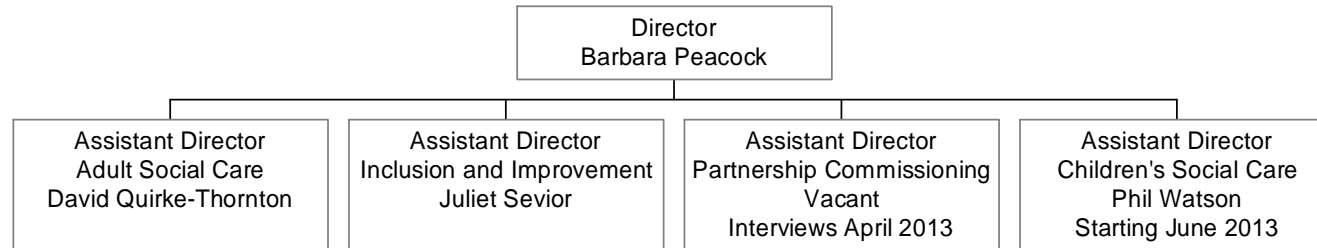


- Highways Maintenance
- Capital Projects
- Traffic and Parking
- Waste
- Safer Communities
- RCC Performance & Intelligence Hub

- Development Control
- Local and Regional Planning
- Integrated Transport
- Building Control Partnership
- Economic Development
- Social Regeneration and Europe
- Strategic & Operational Housing

- Leisure and Sports
- Arts, Theatres and Events
- Green Spaces and Country Parks
- Libraries
- Tourism

## Children and Adults – Caring and Learning



- Direct Services
- Learning Disabilities
- Mental Health Client Role
- Older People Services
- Physical Disabilities
- Voluntary Sector Management

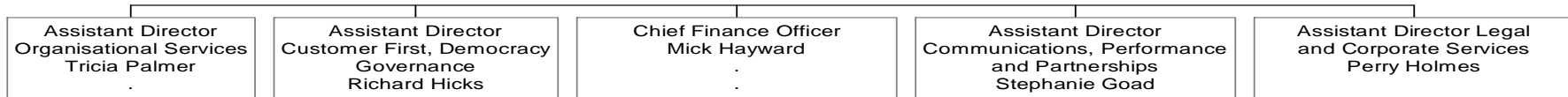
- Youth, Health and Action
- Specialist Youth Services
- Inclusion
- Pupil Referral Units
- Special Education Needs
- Extended Services
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- School Challenge and Improvement
- Early Years

- Children's Trust
- Commissioning
- C&A Performance & Intelligence Hub, Place Planning Review and Capital Programmes
- Strategy

- Integrated Team Rochester / Chatham
- Integrated Team Strood
- Integrated Team Gillingham
- Specialist Children's Services



## Business Support Department



- Human Resources
- Organisational Change
- Health and Safety
- Adult Education
- ICT

- Customer Contact
- Member Services
- Democratic Services
- Registrars and Bereavement

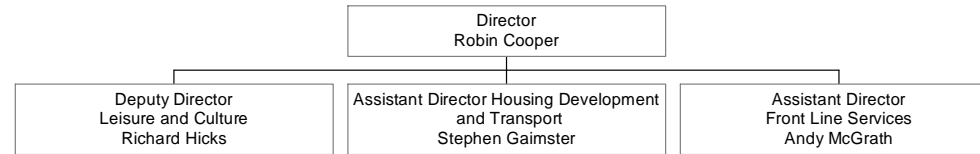
- Finance and Accounting
- Systems and Exchequer
- Audit Services
- Revenue and Benefits

- Corporate Performance & Intelligence
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- Safeguarding Board
- Administration Hubs

- Legal Services
- Licensing and Enforcement
- Strategic Procurement and Contracts
- Property, Buildings and Design
- Category Management

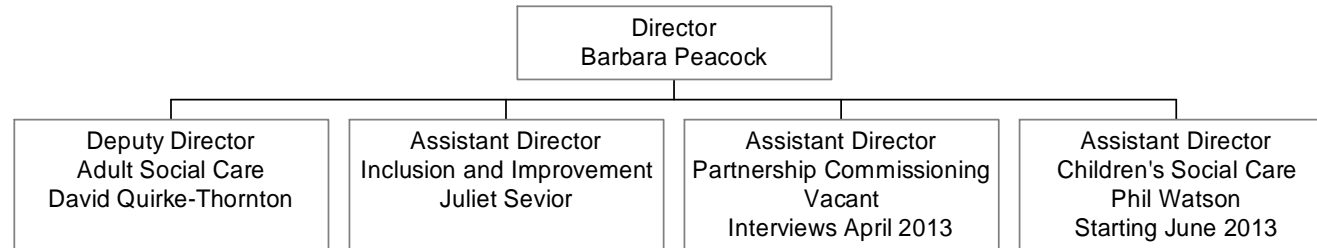


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