

Report of Head of Intelligence and Policy

Report to Director for Resources and Housing

Date: 11 March 2021

Subject: Intelligence and Policy: Service Review & Restructure

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

1. Main Issues

- This report provides the Director for Resources and Housing with the information to approve the implementation of the Intelligence and Policy Service Review carried out during 2020/21.
- In September 2020, the Executive Board agreed proposals for the reduction of the size of the Intelligence and Policy Service to provide a net saving of £173k, through a combination of a decrease in NJC posts; a comprehensive restructure of the team; and, a review of the breadth and depth of services provided.
- The JNC leadership of the Service is subject to the parallel JNC review. Strategy and Improvement (of which the Intelligence and Policy Service is a part), is reviewing its overall leadership structure. As part of this, the Head of Business Planning and Risk will leave the Service to take up a new role elsewhere in the organisation. The Head of Policy and Intelligence will take on all line management arrangements and responsibilities.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The Intelligence and Policy Service plays a key role in reviewing the Best Council Plan and monitoring progress against our aims and objectives, from socio-economic analysis, policy development and engagement, through to business-planning, performance and risk. The reduction in capacity resulting from the Service Review will hasten the moves towards closer collaboration and joint working; increasingly using of technology in harvesting and presenting data and analysis; and, working with client services and stakeholders, to

manage demand, lessen bureaucratic processes and promote more self-service amongst managers. In future a more focused prioritisation of service provision will be required.

3. Resource Implications

- The implementation of the Executive Board's decision of September 2020 requires a reduction in the size of the Intelligence and Policy Service to provide a net saving of £173k through a combination of a decrease in NJC posts; a comprehensive restructure of the team; and, a review of the breadth and depth of services provided. Further financial information is provided within the report.
- The JNC leadership of the Service is subject to the parallel JNC review. The Head of Business Planning and Risk will leave the Service to take up a new role elsewhere. The Head of Policy and Intelligence will take on all line management arrangements and responsibilities.
- Clearly use of the Early Leavers' Initiative (ELI) and other voluntary measures have been pursued as the first option, understanding that the corporate 'managing staff reductions' process may need to be followed to fully deliver the required savings. Three colleagues are leaving under ELI by the end of March 2021 following approval of individual business cases. These ELI contribute £100,479 towards the required savings.
- In addition, the Service currently has a spread of grades and varying job descriptions (JDs). This is due to the Service having been established on 1st April 2017, bringing together a number of teams carrying out similar functions from across the council into a single service. They came with disparate JDs covering a variety of grades, neither of which have been revised, pending a restructure. Intelligence and Policy Service JDs were subsequently drawn up and agreed through job evaluation in 2018 and staff recruited to the service since then have been against these new JDs and grades. Through this restructure, updated, consistent job descriptions and grades that reflect the future requirements for the Intelligence and Policy Service, as well as improving parity and consistency across the team, will be adopted.

Recommendations

The Director for Resources and Housing is recommended to approve the implementation of the Executive Board's decision of September 2020 to reduce the size of the Intelligence and Policy Service to provide a net saving of £173k, through: a combination of a decrease in NJC posts; a comprehensive restructure of the team; and a review of the breadth and depth of services provided.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides the Director for Resources and Housing with the information to approve the implementation of the Intelligence and Policy Service Review.

2. Background information

- 2.1 Recent years have seen a series of reviews and consolidation of intelligence and policy activity across the council, which has resulted in a reduction of capacity; a move towards closer collaboration and joint working; the increased use of technology and associated requirements for self-service amongst managers; and, a more focused prioritisation of service provision.
- 2.2 The Covid-19 crisis has accelerated these factors, our response has shown that often more targeted analysis can prove valuable in identifying key issues more rapidly. Data-sharing, directorate consultation, and multiple approvals have often been reduced cut or speeded-up. The mode of operation in future will need to build on this experience, but also continue under-pinning, longer-term change.

3. Main issues

Operational Context

- 3.1 There are a number of functions that make up the Intelligence and Policy Service, the changing context in which they operate and the resources available are key considerations in achieving the savings required.
- **Consultation and Engagement** - This function continues to play an important role, both corporately and in the Covid-19 response, with recent work on Devolution, Home-Working, Wellbeing, Budget savings etc. It will continue to play a key role in supporting strategy and policy development.
 - **Policy** - Although policy is a key component of the Service (not least in providing cross-council leadership), there is only limited capacity within the team, much of the work is progressed by cross-council and partnership working. In future, collaborative cross-council/city working will become even more critical. The revised service approach will need to reflect these demands.
 - **Risk and Performance** – Significant progress has been made in both strengthening links between these two agendas, but also building strong relationships with embedded activity within directorates. However, the Covid-19 response has highlighted the need for lighter-touch, more streamlined approaches which increasingly utilise technology. In response it will be necessary to fully exploit the range of skills from across the Intelligence and Policy Service, with issues/project-based working becoming the norm.
 - **Housing Data Analysis** – This function is almost entirely focused on supporting housing, although their experience in adopting technology provides wider benefits.
 - **Spatial Data Team** – This function has also played an important role in response to the pandemic, providing support to frontline services in understanding the nature of demand, informing prioritisation, and starting to demonstrate what a post-Covid-19 approach to data sharing and analysis might look like. There are longer standing challenges, reflected in this team, but also more broadly across the council, about linking the data analysis the team provides with policy analysis. Improvement in linking data analysis with policy development is a key priority going forward.
- 3.2 The examination of the key functions above highlights: the need to hasten the moves towards closer collaboration and joint working; increasing use of technology in harvesting and presenting data and analysis; and, working with client services and stakeholders to manage demand, lessen bureaucratic processes and promote more self-service amongst managers. In future a more focused prioritisation of service provision is required as the Service will have a smaller overall resource available.

- 3.3 There is a growing move to a stronger cross-council approach to analysis and policy development. Relationships with embedded directorate capacity and DIS are central here. It is also critical to deepen partnership relationships, perhaps most notably with the Universities, the CCG and the Third Sector. Further strengthening cross-council networks will be a priority in responding to the reduction in capacity (across the Council). These networks include the Intelligence Group, Business Intelligence Practice Community, Policy Network and University Collaboration Group.

The Proposal

- 3.4 The review and the subsequent proposals respond to Service demands now and into the future, based on organisational priorities, recent and current operational practices, and the skills and experience of staff. All this against the backdrop of increased flexible working across the council. The underlying principles of the review, in line with broader council-wide approaches, are to Simplify, Standardise, Share and Stop. We believe the proposals set out a sustainable distribution of resources against likely future patterns of demand. Clearly, we need to retain capacity to ensure the Service can provide the insights/assessment in support of our Best City and Best Council Ambitions; but also be sustainable in terms of appropriate workloads and the maintenance of quality outputs.

- 3.5 The key elements of the future structure and focus of the Intelligence and Policy Service are:

- The team will be formed around four functional areas: Consultation/Engagement and Policy; Corporate Risk and Performance; Spatial Data and Intelligence; and, Housing Data and Performance;
- Changes in the approach to the Service's operation have been underway for some time, specifically: being more flexible and agile in the way we work; drawing on key skills and experience from all teams; a focus on personal development and, working cross-team, cross-council, cross-city on priorities and shared issues;
- In some areas the Service has moved towards lighter-touch, more streamlined approaches to present data and analysis and reporting. These approaches have increasingly used technology and short-cut bureaucracy, particularly in the production of reports to CLT, Executive Board and Scrutiny Boards. The Covid-19 response has hastened these moves and this direction will continue;
- As stated above, the Covid-19 response has hastened the moves towards lighter-touch, more streamlined approaches which increasingly utilise technology, particularly in the production of reports to the Corporate Leadership Team, Executive Board and Scrutiny Boards.
- In order to facilitate workforce flexibility and agility the Service will operate with generic roles (see JDs at Appendix 2).

- 3.6 Appendix 1 sets out the current organisational structure and the revised structure. Appendix 2 sets out the revised JDs, which both reflect the revised structure, and adopt a more consistent approach to grades and reporting lines in line with the council's Organisational Design principles.

Impact of the Proposal

- 3.7 Overall the NJC headcount will be reduced by 5 equating to an FTE reduction of 7.14. This will be met in part by deleting 2.8 FTE vacancies and 3 members of staff due to exit the organisation under the Early Leavers' Initiative on or by end March 2021.

PO6 Level

- The current PO6 posts (x3) will be retained, with functional responsibilities remaining constant, although reporting lines will be simplified where appropriate, reflecting

organisational design principles. These posts will report to the Head of Intelligence and Policy.

Adoption of Flatter Reporting Structures

- Going forward we will adopt a flatter structure for the Service in line with the council's organisational design principles, with the PO4 team leaders increasingly taking a professional lead on projects and priorities, working closely with other teams (within IPS and beyond), using matrix working on shared priorities and projects.
- We have considered the consultation feedback and agree that a consistent approach to the adoption of flatter structures is desirable. Therefore we are extending this approach across all parts of the team, rather than parts of the team as originally planned. We will immediately adopt a flatter structure in the Consultation, Engagement and Policy Team, the Corporate Risk and Performance Team and the Spatial Data and Intelligence Team. We will consider how best to extend it to Housing Data and Performance over the next 6/12 months, as the line management implications will need to be thought through. We will review the move to flatter structures over a 12-month period to assess their effectiveness.

Consultation & Engagement and Policy Team

- The PO5 post currently in the consultation & engagement and policy team will be deleted from the revised structure, primarily due to the changing nature of the work programme within the team, which will be increasingly analytical in nature and not require a more senior generalist role.
- The policy capacity in the team will remain limited, with a continued and increased emphasis on cross-council working.
- The Review's immediate impact on this team will be limited to the deleted PO5 post and the shift to the revised JDs.

Corporate Risk and Performance Team

- This team will reduce significantly, from the current 6 posts to 3 posts. The current PO6 and PO4 posts will remain, with the current PO1 post regraded to a PO2 post. All posts will shift to the revised JDs.
- This reduction is a reflection of the significant changes in approach to both corporate reporting, specifically a more streamlined, data-driven approach, and to more cross-council working on business-planning. The operational shift to this more minimalist approach to reporting, combined with the use of data-dashboards, will significantly reduce the capacity required. Clearly there will be a need to manage corporate expectations. Although the PO6 has recently taking on additional responsibilities for Business Continuity Management, this dovetails closely with their existing risk management responsibilities and will be mitigated through both increased automation of performance reporting and closer working with the other teams in the service.
- The PO3 posts in this team will be deleted.

Spatial Data and Intelligence Team

- The team will adopt a flatter structure and post-holders transitioned to revised JDs.
- The team will need to continue the changes of approach already underway. Specifically, working cross-council in supporting city-wide and local socio-economic analysis, and contributing to the cross-council efforts to strengthen data sharing, analysis and presentation.
- The PO4 team leader post will become vacant from 1st April 2021 due to ELI, with appointment to it underway in line with the council's MSR Policy. This post will be reshaped, again to reflect the changing context. The post holder will be required to lead

the team's work programme, but also actively engage with directorates, providing socio-economic insights, running network sessions etc.

Housing Data and Performance Team

- In the short-term, the structure and working arrangements for this team will remain broadly unchanged, as they are almost entirely focused on supporting the Housing Service. However, lessons can be learned and shared from their data analytics experience. We will consider how best to extend a flatter structure to this team over the next 6/12 months, as the line management implications will need to be thought through.
- All posts will shift to the revised JDs with work to be carried out shortly to create new C3 JDs that, following job evaluation, will then be implemented.

Overall Workforce Implications

- The proposals mean that current vacant posts (2.8 FTE) will be deleted.
- The posts set out below will be deleted:
 - 1 x PO5 Senior Performance and Improvement Manager;
 - 2 x PO3 Programme Management Officer (one of whom will be exiting the council under the ELI scheme);
 - 1 x PO3 Performance and Improvement Manager;
 - 1 x PO2 (Policy and Performance Officer) (exiting the council under the ELI scheme);
- 1 x PO1 Performance and Improvement Officer will be regraded to a PO2 Intelligence and Policy Officer role
- All staff under the new structure will be moved on to revised Intelligence and Policy Service job descriptions.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 Engagement with all staff in the service has been a key element in the Service Review. In response to the Covid crisis priorities were reviewed and the work programme of the team was adjusted to allocate resources where needed, with some work stopping. Staff engagement played a key role in re-profiling resources and adopting new ways of working. This staff engagement has also informed the Service Review.

4.1.2 Specific consultation and engagement on the proposal to date has included:

- A virtual service team meeting on 14th September 2020 in which staff were briefed on the Intelligence and Policy Service review that would be put forward for Executive Board consideration at its meeting on 24th September as part of the 2021/22 council savings proposals. A follow-up e-mail was then sent that day to all staff which included a link to the council webpage on which the Executive Board report would be published on 16th September.
- Regular verbal updates to staff through virtual team meetings on the progress of the review following September Executive Board approval.
- Following Trade Union notification and initial discussions, further virtual staff briefings were held on 23rd November, 15th December 2020 and 10th February 2021 to share and consider the draft proposals and provide staff with an opportunity to ask questions of managers, HR and trade union colleagues. Throughout, staff have been encouraged to raise queries, directly or via their manager.
- Following these briefings, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) documents were provided in response to questions put forward by colleagues. They are hosted on the

Intelligence and Policy Service SharePoint site accessible to all staff within the service with the documents shared via e-mail with trade union colleagues too.

- Formal consultation with the Trade Unions began 2nd December 2020 in which next steps (notably the process and timescales) on further consultation and engagement were agreed. Consultation on the proposed structure ran until 15th January, with consultation on the transition to the new structure (including selection pool and selection criteria) running until 24th February 2021. The feedback received from individuals and via Trade Unions, has further informed the Service Review and the recommendations set out here.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 An equality screening document was included as part of the proposal to Executive Board in September 2020.
- 4.2.2 An organisational equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment has been completed to ensure no detrimental impact as part of the consultation, engagement and implementation. This is attached for information.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 As noted above in the summary, the reduction in capacity resulting from the Service Review will hasten the moves towards closer collaboration and joint working; increasingly using of technology in harvesting and presenting data and analysis; and, working with client services and stakeholders, to manage demand, lessen bureaucratic processes and promote more self-service amongst managers. In future a more focused prioritisation of service provision will be required.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 There are no direct climate emergency implications.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 In terms of workforce implications the reduction of the size of the Intelligence and Policy Service to provide a net saving of £173k, will be pursued through a combination of a decrease in NJC posts; a comprehensive restructure of the team; and, a review of the breadth and depth of services provided.

Financial summary

- The service's 2020/21 gross budget is £1,100k which includes £424k income from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Its net managed budget is therefore £676k.
- The service's NJC staff comprise 23.8 FTE with an approved 2020/21 staffing budget of £857k. This approved budget includes an historical efficiency target of £239k.
- The approved savings proposal is based on reducing the NJC staffing FTE by 30% to 16.7 FTE with a reduction in the staffing budget (assuming a 5% vacancy factor) of £133k to £725k (rounded) for all NJC posts.
- The proposal is designed to address the £239k efficiency savings built into the base and a further £133k of staff savings.
- An additional £40k of savings will be delivered through reductions in non-staffing costs.
- Taking this all into account, the overall net saving for 2021/22 from this review is £173k. As a proportion of the total budget spend of £1,100k, the saving equates to 16%.
- As noted above, the current budget recovers £424k of income from the HRA. This will be reduced by £124k to £300k from 2021/22 to reflect the staffing reductions proposed.
- The service review savings have now been built into the 2021/22 Budget approved by Full Council on 24th February 2021.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.5.1 There are no legal implications and all information is publicly available. This report is not subject to call-in.

4.6 Risk management

4.6.1 In large part the Review is based on expanding recent practice in adopting fresh approaches to reporting and analysis including: continued streamlining of processes which underpin reporting; reducing the length and contextual material in the current reporting approaches; and, using technology more effectively. It will be vital to further embed and operationalise these approaches. However, our response to Covid-19 (e.g. Gold Dashboard) provides evidence and confidence that we can capitalise on this methods quickly.

4.6.2 If we fail to fully adopt these ways of working, the reduced capacity in the Service will see a corresponding reduction in capability and potential risk to the wellbeing of staff remaining in post due to unsustainable workloads, thus reducing the overall effectiveness of the Service. We have established and continued to review a Service Risk Assessment of the team as a component of the consultation process, and will use regular communication loops to continually assess and address stress risks, including 121's, regular communications via team meetings, FAQs etc. Ongoing staff communications throughout the Review process have included regular reminders of the staff support available, including the council's Wellbeing offer and Supporting Futures Toolkit.

5. Conclusions

5.1 This report provides the Director for Resources and Housing with the information to approve the implementation of the Intelligence and Policy Service Review.

5.2 The key elements of the Intelligence and Policy Service restructure are:

- The Service will be formed around four interlinked functional areas: Consultation/Engagement and Policy; Corporate Risk and Performance; Spatial Data and Intelligence; and, Housing Data and Performance;
- Changes in the approach to the Services operation have been underway for some time, specifically: being more flexible and agile in the way we work; drawing on key skills and experience from all teams; a focus on personal development; and, working cross team, cross-council, cross-city on priorities and shared issues.
- The Service has moved towards lighter-touch, more streamlined approaches which increasingly utilise technology and short-cut bureaucracy, particularly in the production of reports to CLT, Executive Board and Scrutiny Boards. The Covid-19 response has hastened these moves and this direction will continue.
- Going forward we will adopt a flatter structure for the Service in line with the council's organisational design principles, with the PO4 team leaders increasingly taking a professional lead on projects and priorities, working closely with other teams (within IPS and beyond), using matrix working on shared priorities and projects.
- We need to continue to breakdown constrained working horizons, where we focus on a relatively narrow areas. We are not realising the full potential of the wealth of transferable skills we have, nor those more broadly across the organisation. Major benefits can be realised in adopting a less rigid approach.

5.3 Overall the NJC headcount will be reduced by 5 equating to an FTE reduction of 7.14. This will be met in part by deleting 2.8 FTE vacancies and 3 members of staff due to exit the organisation under the Early Leavers' Initiative on or by end March 2021.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Director for Resources and Housing is recommended to approve the implementation of the Executive Board's decision of September 2020 to reduce the size of the Intelligence and Policy Service to provide a net saving of £173k, through: a combination of a decrease in NJC posts; a comprehensive restructure of the team; and a review of the breadth and depth of services provided.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the current organisational structure and the proposed revised structure. Appendix 2 sets out the revised Job Descriptions, which both reflect the revised structure, and adopt a more consistent approach to grades and reporting lines. The Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact Assessment is also attached.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.