

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

LOCAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE: 3RD FEBRUARY 2011

GENERAL PURPOSES: 16TH FEBRUARY 2011

REPORT, ON BEHALF OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP – REDUCTION IN FULL TIME EQUIVALENT POSTS

1. Purpose of report: This report is to give information, report on on-going consultation, and seek approval for the proposed possible redundancy of up to three posts.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Council/Committee:

2.1 Agree to the proposed possible redundancies and give approval for the HR team to proceed with issuing notice to staff of termination of employment, on the grounds of redundancy.

Note: In preparing this report, due regard had been had to equality of opportunity, human rights, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental and risk management considerations as appropriate. Relevant officers have been consulted in relation to any legal, financial or human resources implications and comments received are reflected in the report.

3. Information, Issues and Options

3.1 Information

- 3.1.1 Following on from Council's approval in principle for St Edmundsbury Council Revenues and Benefits team to form a new partnership with the Anglia Revenues Partnership; there has been a great deal of work behind the scenes to ensure that there will be a fit for purpose structure in place that can deliver the needs of the new organisation.
- 3.1.2 It is essential that in order to make the most efficient use of resources that a restructure take place that looks at all partnership staff and the St Edmundsbury team that would be joining. Across the whole structure there has been a reduction in FTE posts by 11.6 for 2011-2012.
- 3.1.3 All partners have been operating a vacancy management protocol since August 2010 with the aim of only filling vacancies with secondments/temporary contracts until 31st March 2011.
- 3.1.4 Branch and Regional Unison have been involved and consulted throughout the process.
- 3.1.5 The ARP HR Group, with representative staff and HR professionals, has been in place since the creation of the initial partnership. They meet regularly and play an active part in providing feedback and ideas about staff issues within ARP.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 There are a number of staff who are formally at risk of redundancy, for whom following consultation, there appears to be a lack of suitable alternative employment.

3.2.2 There are three posts under the Breckland establishment that are currently in the position of being “at risk” with no apparent suitable alternative employment at the present time.

3.3 Options

3.3.1 To recommend the proposed possible redundancies and give approval for the HR team to proceed with issuing notice to staff of termination of employment, on the grounds of redundancy.

3.3.2 No to recommend the proposed possible redundancies and give approval for the HR team to proceed with issuing notice to staff of termination of employment, on the grounds of redundancy.

3.4 Reasons for the Recommendations

3.4.1 To provide the correct staffing structure for the partnership to be able to move forward.

3.4.2 To provide staff with the correct consultation and formal notifications.

4. Risk and Financial Implications

4.1 Risk

4.1.1 The future of benefits administration within local authorities is uncertain following the government white paper which proposes the payment be changed in to a Universal Credit payment by the Department for Work and Pensions. However it is financial opinion that immediate revenue savings will be made by the partner authorities by the efficiencies made not just by the staff resources, but by the economies of scale for procurement, working practices, joint ICT and telephony etc.

4.1.2 As with all instances of termination of employment, there may be an appeal against the decision. Following an appeal, if termination of employment continues then ex-employees do have the right to go to Employment Tribunal either for re-instatement or compensation/costs. This risk has been decreased by due involvement of the recognised trade union, ARP staff briefings, Connect Four staff newsletters, information being given on the shared drives, individual consultation through all staff being offered 1:1s with management and HR, an agreed selection and scoring criteria, skills audit/ preference forms.

4.2 Financial

4.2.1 Financial implications of the redundancies are covered by a separate report detailing all financial matters purporting to the expansion of the partnership. This went to Cabinet on 11th January 2010 with the recommendation that Cabinet recommend to Council the expansion of the ARP to include St Edmundsbury Council with effect from 1st April 2011.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 Please see 4.1.2

6. Other Implications

- a) Equalities: None
- b) Section 17, Crime and Disorder Act 1998: None
- c) Section 40, Natural Environmental & Rural Communities Act 2006: None
- d) Human Resources: See report information
- e) Human Rights: None

f) Other: None

7. Alignment to Council Priorities

7.1 Delivering the Entrepreneurial Council

8. Ward/Community Affected

8.1 N/a

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Key Decision Status (Executive Decisions only)

This is part of a key decision that is included on the Forward Plan