
**AGREEMENT WITH HARTLEPOOL FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,
HUMAN RESOURCES**

Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Stephen Harker
Efficiency and Resources Portfolio

Responsible Director - Paul Wildsmith, Director of Resources

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To enter into an agreement with Hartlepool Borough Council for the provision of an Assistant Director (Human Resources) with effect from 1 November 2011.

Summary

2. The Council's recently agreed Senior Management structure includes the post of Assistant Director -Human Resources at the grade of Assistant Director 1. The current postholder Lesley Blundell is due to retire in November 2011 and as part of the Council's ongoing Business Model this report recommends a shared Assistant Director - Human Resources with Hartlepool Borough Council. The current Chief Customer & Workforce Services Officer at Hartlepool would undertake the joint role of Assistant Director -Human Resource on a 50/50 basis saving the Council approximately £50,000 per annum.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that :-
 - (a) Council agree the role of Assistant Director - Human Resources be undertaken by Joanne Machers on a shared basis with Hartlepool operating under an agreement between Hartlepool and Darlington Councils.
 - (b) Council to delegate the finalisation of the terms of the contract to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member with portfolio for Efficiency and Resources.
 - (c) Contract Procedure Rules be waived to enable the agreement to be entered into.

Reasons

4. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
- (a) To enable the Council to make savings by working in partnership to fill a key role.
 - (b) To enable the final agreement to be completed.

Paul Wildsmith
Director of Resources

Background Papers

No Background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Paul Wildsmith : Extension 2301
TAB

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no specific implications for Crime and Disorder
Health and Well Being	There are no implications for Health and Wellbeing
Carbon Impact	There will be a Carbon Impact in travel between the two authorities.
Diversity	The post will not go out to open advert, but there are no other diversity issues.
Wards Affected	All wards affected equally
Groups Affected	All groups affected equally
Budget and Policy Framework	This does not represent a change to the budget or policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not an executive decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an executive decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The proposal represents an efficiency which enables the Council to deliver the same for less, enabling resources to be directed towards the key outcomes of the strategy.
Efficiency	The proposals will further reduce the Council's management costs, as detailed in the report.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. Since May 2008 the HRM Service has been jointly operated for the Council as follows:
 - (a) Directly employed by DBC – Assistant Director providing Advisory HR Services, Organisation Development, Workforce Development, Workforce Planning, HR Strategy, Policy Development, Job Evaluation, Management of Equal Pay Claims and Health & Safety.
 - (b) Xentrall Shared Services partnership providing transactional HR Services, Payroll, Recruitment and Employment Contracts.
6. As can be seen the Council already has a track record in sharing HR services and therefore it is natural that when the current Assistant Director – Human Resources announced her forthcoming retirement that consideration should be given to whether it would be possible to extend the scope of sharing HR services.
7. The Council is facing a period of significant change with a planned move to become a commissioning council although the exact form is not clear. The general direction suggests the number of staff directly employed by the Council will be significantly less with many services provided to the public of Darlington by other providers and in partnership with other Councils. The reduction in staffing numbers itself does not directly impact on the role of a Assistant Director – Human Resources as the role is one of strategic leadership for the organisation, however the future changes will mean the HR function will have to change, adapt and reduce its costs to reflect a smaller workforce. Clearly a way to advance this is to further expand the Shared Services approach to HR Services which commenced with the Xentrall model.

Options for Replacement of Assistant Director – Human Resources

8. The Council has three options in respect of the role of Assistant Director – Human Resources as set out below :-
 - (a) Recruit a full time Assistant Director – Human Resources to commence work on 1/11/11.
 - (b) Recruit an interim Assistant Director – Human Resources to commence 1/11/11.
 - (c) Share an Assistant Director – Human Resources with another Council.
9. Given the direction of the Council and its desire to share more services Option (a) would reduce the ability to meet our direction and is therefore not recommended. Option (b) is a flexible solution; however recruiting a suitable candidate for a short term appointment is not always possible. In terms of Option (c), a shared Head of HRM with another Council would be the most beneficial solution. The Council has an established HR partnership with Stockton and is working closely with Hartlepool Council on the possibility of strategic collaboration therefore discussions have taken place with both Councils and the recommended route would be to share an Assistant Director - Human Resources with Hartlepool with effect from 1 November 2011.

10. Our existing Assistant Director will work full time until the end of November and thereafter on a part-time basis to support the during what is likely to be a particularly busy time in relation to budget consultation.

Proposed Sharing of Assistant Director – Human Resources

11. It is proposed that Joanne Machers the Chief Customer & Workforce Services Officer at Hartlepool undertake the role on a 2.5 day a week basis. Her suitability to undertake the role has been assessed by the Chief Officers Executive and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council; and they would recommend her for the role.
12. She will remain an employee of Hartlepool Borough Council and fulfil the role at Darlington via a legal agreement which would be subject to annual review.
13. Although the arrangements for undertaking the role is different to other examples in the Council of shared posts the outcome will not be different to existing shared posts such as :-
 - (a) Assistant Director School Improvement with Hartlepool
 - (b) Head of ICT with Stockton Borough Council
 - (c) Xentrall Shared Services Manager with Stockton Borough Council
14. The legal agreement with Hartlepool is subject to finalisation and therefore Council are asked to agree to the filling of the role as set out in the report and delegate the finalisation of the legal agreement to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Efficiency and Resources Portfolio. The legal agreement with Hartlepool is a contract with a value potentially in excess of £75,000 over the length of the arrangement and therefore a waiving of contract procedure rules is required to enable the agreement to be entered into. In relation to the European Journal HR services are Part B Services and therefore formal journal advertisement is not required.

Outcome of Consultation

15. No formal consultation has taken place with the public however consultation has taken place with the post holders at Darlington and Hartlepool Borough Council. Both are in agreement with the proposal.