

**CABINET**  
**12 JANUARY 2021**

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**REVISION TO THE COUNCIL'S SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member -  
Councillor Heather Scott, Leader and all Cabinet Members**

**Responsible Director -  
Paul Wildsmith, Managing Director**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To propose a new Senior Management Structure for the Council and to recommend appointments to three posts.

**Summary**

2. The report presents a new senior structure which has been developed with input from Cabinet that better aligns to the Council's priorities, it also realigns services to ensure delivery of priorities. The proposal creates a post of Chief Executive which has the lead for Economic Growth as well as being the Head of Paid Service; the report recommends Ian Williams be appointed to the post.
3. The proposal includes the creation of a Group Director for Operations; to which it is recommended that Elizabeth Davison is appointed. It also creates a Group Director of Services post which is recommended to be advertised internally.
4. The posts of Managing Director and Assistant Director of Housing and Building Services are deleted, following the current postholders retirements, and a number of services are realigned to new groups as a result.
5. A new post of Assistant Director (Housing and Revenues) is created by merging the existing Head of Housing and Revenues post with the relevant responsibilities previously held by the Assistant Director (Housing and Building Services). Anthony Sandys, the existing Head of Housing and Revenues is to be appointed to this post.
6. The proposal can be accommodated within the existing budgets.

**Recommendation**

7. Cabinet are recommended to:-
  - (a) Recommend to Council the Senior Management as set out in **Appendix A**.

- (b) Recommend to the Human Resources Committee and Council the appointment of Ian Williams as Chief Executive.
- (c) Recommend to the Human Resources Committee and Council the appointment of Elizabeth Davison as Group Director of Operations.
- (d) Recommend to Council the appointment of Anthony Sandys as Assistant Director (Housing and Revenues).

## Reasons

8. The recommendations are supported to amend the structure and to make key internal appointments.

**Paul Wildsmith**  
**Managing Director**

## Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report

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S17 Crime and Disorder	No direct impact as a result of this report
Health and Wellbeing	No direct impact as a result of this report
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	No direct impact as a result of this report
Diversity	No direct impact as a result of this report
Wards Affected	All wards are affected equally.
Groups Affected	All groups are affected equally.
Budget and Policy Framework	The recommendations can be accommodated within the existing MTFP
Key Decision	This is not an Executive decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an Executive decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	No direct impact as a result of this report
Efficiency	The structure aims to increase efficiency
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The report does not impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

9. The Council's existing Senior Management Structure was approved by Council in January 2018. Recently the Managing Director and the Assistant Director of Housing and Building Services have announced their retirements in the spring of

2021. The opportunity has been taken to work with Cabinet to review the structure, in light of these retirements, and Cabinet's priorities for the future.

10. The existing structure is set out at **Appendix B** and Members will see this structure is based around three groups:-
  - (a) Resources – Led by the Managing Director.
  - (b) Children & Adults – Led by the Director.
  - (c) Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services – Led by the Director.
11. The structure was established following the deletion of the stand-alone Chief Executive post with the Head of Paid Service role being added to the Director of Resources role, leading to the creation of the Managing Director role.
12. Senior Statutory roles within the structure are allocated as below :-
  - (a) Head of Paid Service – Managing Director
  - (b) Monitoring Officer – Assistant Director Law & Governance
  - (c) Chief Financial Officer – Assistant Director (Resources)
  - (d) Statutory Director of Children Services and statutory Director of Adults Services – Director of Children and Adults Services
  - (e) Director of Public Health
13. The previous restructure reduced Senior Management costs by circa £200,000 per annum, in addition to previous senior management savings of £2.2m per annum. The review of the existing structure has not therefore sought to deliver major savings as such reductions would undermine the ability to deliver the Council's ambitions, however, the proposals make a saving compared to the existing MTFP. The restructure has therefore concentrated on strengthening priority areas and improving service alignment.
14. The Council's recently agreed Council Plan – Delivering Success for Darlington - highlights economic growth as the Council's top priority, and one of the Council's biggest challenges in the medium term, will be the efficient use of resources, to ensure a balanced Medium-Term Financial Plan. These two aspects are addressed in the proposed restructure.
15. In terms of service alignment there is an issue to be addressed in the restructure, currently Local Taxation, Benefits and Customer Services sit within the Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services department rather than the Resources Group which is the logical place for them. In the current structure strategic supervision is provided by the Managing Director in his role as Director of Resources. The restructure addresses this structural anomaly.
16. In terms of priority areas, over the coming years, transport, delivery of capital projects and the consistent delivery of good quality neighbourhood services will be key, and therefore these services are given prominence within the proposed structure.
17. Set out in the next section of the report is the proposed structure which addresses the issues raised above.

## Proposed Structure

18. The structure has been developed with Cabinet input and given economic growth is the Council's key priority they feel the most senior role in the Council should lead the economic growth agenda, ensuring they have the Council's priority service under their direct control and the postholder should be very experienced in the field of economic growth. It is therefore proposed that the Managing Director role as currently structured is deleted and replaced with the role of Chief Executive, who will be Head of Paid Service and also have responsibility for line management of the Economic Growth function. This approach will enable the postholder to take a strategic lead on economic growth ensuring the Council's top priority permeates throughout the Council and its partners.
19. The retirement of the Managing Director removes the Director of Resources role and given the Council's priority of maximising the use of resources and managing finance effectively; it is proposed that a new post of Group Director of Operations be created to oversee the current resources function.
20. With regard to realigning services, the following services will be transferred to the Operations Group :-
  - (a) Local Taxation
  - (b) Benefits
  - (c) Customer Services
21. In addition to the above, due to the way services are currently configured and managed, the Housing Service will also transfer given the same Head of Service manages Housing and the "resources" services. Housing is a good fit with other services in the Operations Group given its need for sound financial planning and resource management.
22. The services transferred to the Group Director of Operations represent a significant element of the Assistant Director of Housing and Building Services portfolio and it is proposed that this post is deleted to provide funding for other new posts. As a result of the deletion of the post, it is proposed that the Building Services division transfers to the Assistant Director Transport and Capital Projects, this represents a good alignment of services and reflects that there is already much crossover and co-ordination done between the service areas in the existing structure.
23. The final major proposed change is that given the move of economic growth from the Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services department, the group be renamed the Services Group and it be headed up by a Group Director. This new Group Director role will give focused strategic leadership to the vast majority of public facing services that help create the environment to support our top priority of economic growth.
24. It is also proposed that the Children and Adults department is renamed the People's Group to better reflect the breadth of services contained in the group.
25. The revised structure is set out at Appendix A.

## Human Resource Implications

26. It is proposed that Ian Williams, current Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services be appointed to the role of Chief Executive for reasons explained below, but also in recognition that the Chief Executive will have the strategic lead for Economic Growth for the Council, which represents a major part of his current role. In 2014, given the Council's financial position, Ian was appointed to the Director role specifically focused on Economic Growth via a stringent recruitment process. Following a management restructure in 2018, Ian then became responsible for Neighbourhood Services, however economic growth remained the overriding priority.
27. The appointment is recommended given his vast and regionally recognised experience in the field of economic growth, together with his leadership skills demonstrated during his time at Darlington. Ian has also gained much experience of the wider Council through his involvement in the Council's senior management and by acting as a de facto Deputy to the Managing Director. He has led many priority schemes and initiatives for the Council, and his appointment to the role would ensure continuity of leadership following the Managing Director's retirement.
28. It is proposed that Elizabeth Davison is appointed to the Group Director of Operations post. This new role encompasses all her existing remit, including the statutory role of Chief Financial Officer, for which you must be a fully qualified accountant. In her current role, Elizabeth is also a member of the Chief Officers Executive and works closely with the Managing Director and other two Directors to lead the management of the organisation. Whilst Revenues and Benefits is not currently under her remit, Elizabeth has had direct responsibility for strategic financial management covering these areas.
29. Elizabeth has vast experience in the resources field gathered over many years leading the Council's Finance, HR and Health and Safety services along with a number of further back office and corporate functions. In terms of the wider resource functions and that of Housing, she has had considerable exposure to these areas giving her knowledge and experience to confidently take on the role. Due to the breadth and responsibility of the Group Director role and the requirement for a Deputy Section 151 officer, Elizabeth's current Service Director of Resources post will be replaced with an Assistant Director of Resources post yet to be evaluated, but anticipated on grade AD1 with responsibility for Finance, HR and Health and Safety
30. The deletion of the role of Assistant Director (Housing and Building) and the splitting of the role means the existing Head of Housing and Revenues will be subsuming the Assistant Director responsibilities into his Head of Service role. An evaluation of the amended role recommends that the post should be designated Assistant Director (Housing and Revenues) paid on the grade AD2. The existing Head of Housing and Revenues Anthony Sandys will be slotted into this post as it represents a very substantial element of his current role.
31. With regard to the role of Group Director of Services, it is recommended that this is advertised internally as it is felt there are strong internal candidates for the role. Should the internal recruitment process not be successful, then an external process could follow.

32. The People's group is unchanged by this restructure but as part of this proposal is to designate the Head of Education and Inclusion post to that of Assistant Director (Education and Inclusion). There is no change in salary of this post, which is covered by the Soulbury pay scales but it removes an anomaly from the structure.
33. The pay scales for the Director and Assistant Director posts are unchanged and the role of Chief Executive is set at £149,000.
34. The Assistant Director Law and Governance is the Council's statutory monitoring officer, and given the important of governance and legal advice for council decision making, whilst the Assistant Director will report to the Director of Operations for management purposes, he will also sit on the Chief Officers Executive to enable him to discharge his duties more effectively.
35. The proposals set out in this report have been consulted upon with the Chief Officers Executive and the Chief Officers Board and they are supportive of the proposal.

### **Financial Implications**

36. The proposals contained within this report can be accommodated within existing budgets and represent a saving compared to the existing MTFP.