

Guildford Borough Council

Report to: Executive

Date: 9 January 2025

Ward(s) affected: 'All'

Report of: Joint Chief Executive

Report Author: Pedro Wrobel, Chief Executive

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Lead Executive Member: Cllr Julia McShane

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Status: Open

Key decision: Yes

Senior Staff Resources: Joint Chief of Staff

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following changes in organisational structure, capacity is needed to support the Joint Chief Executive in ensuring that the Council operates effectively and is able to deliver its corporate strategy priorities and plans.
- 1.2 To support the effective delivery of priorities and plan and support the closer collaboration between Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils, and specifically to support the Joint Chief Executive, it is proposed that a Joint Chief of Staff post is created.
- 1.3 This post will be a direct report to the Joint Chief Executive and, as a consequence, would be a Chief Officer.
- 1.4 This will result in improving Council delivery, and a saving for Guildford Borough Council by a reduction of the GBC Head of Business Improvement post.

2.0 Recommendation to Executive

That the Executive resolves to:

- 2.1 Approve the creation of a permanent new role of Joint Chief of Staff reporting directly to the Joint Chief Executive, subject to budget

approval by full Council, and subject to the deletion of the Head of Business Improvement post;

- 2.2 Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make any changes to the role, following the outcome of consultation with staff and the Union;
- 2.2 Agree that the post of Joint Chief of Staff will be a shared post with Waverley Borough Council and will be governed by the existing principles of the Inter-Authority Agreement.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To respond to the need to better align the current role of GBC Head of Business Improvement created in May 2024, which reports directly to the Joint Chief Executive, with the work that Waverley will need to do as we move towards a review of their business by SOLACE, and to support wider improvement between both Councils.
- 3.2 To recognise that the current GBC Head of Business Improvement postholder is already undertaking tasks more aligned to a Chief of Staff post and this will clarify responsibilities for postholders and the Council as a whole. This would mean the current GBC Head of Business Improvement post would be deleted in the light of this new joint post being created.
- 3.3 To ensure that the Joint Chief Executive Officer has additional capacity in liaison with the Corporate Leadership Board and Joint Leadership Team given the additional work associated with undertaking Head of Paid Services responsibilities for two sovereign councils.

4.0 Status of Report

This report is not restricted.

5.0 Strategic Priorities

The Joint Chief of Staff role underpins the Council's strategic framework and delivery of the Corporate Strategy and plans. It provides a leading role in delivering all key council priorities, but particularly 'A Resilient and Well-Managed Council'.

6.0 Background

- 6.1 Changes were made to the staff structure reporting into Joint Chief Executive Officer in May 2024 with the creation of a new post, GBC Head of Business Improvement. This post is a direct report into Joint Chief Executive Officer, and therefore is a non-Statutory Chief Officer post.
- 6.2 The post was established in direct response to the findings of the Independent Governance Review of Guildford Borough Council undertaken by Solace and published in March 2024.
- 6.3 The primary purpose of the post is to enable and deliver improvements aligned to our Corporate Strategy and outcomes and which address known issues in governance, leadership, culture, service delivery and value for money. The main vehicle through which this is to be delivered is via an improvement plan. Guildford Borough Council has adopted a 3-year improvement plan.
- 6.4 Since this post was established CLB and Executive have approved other restructures which also include elements of this job description, specifically as it pertains to governance, service improvement and alignment of strategies and policy with council plans.
- 6.5 Specifically, there is some overlap between the GBC Head of Business Improvement post and the Waverley Borough Council Business Transformation Manager post. To ensure that we provide clarity on the purpose of roles and key accountabilities it is necessary to revisit the scope and purpose of the GBC Head of Business Improvement post. Doing so will enable us to eliminate duplication of effort and/or friction in tasks and decision making.
- 6.6 Since the GBC Head of Business Improvement role was implemented the post holder has taken on responsibilities more associated with a Chief of Staff role, which is in use in a number of other local authorities. These posts are focused on supporting a Chief Executive and the equivalent of Corporate Leadership Board and Joint Leadership Team.
- 6.7 Based on the results of benchmarking role profiles across Local Government, the primary purpose of a Chief of Staff post is to support the Chief Executive in the achievement of corporate priorities and objectives and to act as a critical conduit between the Chief Executive and senior officers, to enable more effective

decision making and resolve business issues, recognising the particular pressures on Joint Leadership Team and Corporate Leadership Board members by virtue of their supporting two sovereign councils, additional capacity in this post will significantly assist the effective operation of the Councils' senior leadership team. It will also support increasing collaboration efforts across both councils.

- 6.8 It is proposed that the new Joint Chief of Staff, would be appointed in line with the principles of the inter-authority agreement including the principle that the postholder would be a Waverley Borough Council employee and the costs associated with the post will be **shared equally between the two Councils.**

7.0 Options

- 7.1 Three options were considered:

- Option 1 – Do nothing
- Option 2 – Create a Joint Chief of Staff Post directly reporting to JCEX.

- 7.2 Option 1 has been discounted as it would not resolve the concerns about the scope of the GBC Head of Business Improvement role compared to the current Waverley Borough Council Business Transformation Manager post.

- 7.3 Option 2 would provide additional capacity and capability with a role focused on working collaboratively, challenging strategic thinking where appropriate, and making business recommendations in order to deliver the council's strategic objectives.

- 7.4 Option 2 is the preferred solution as it would provide the requisite clarity in roles but also capacity across both councils. Further it will support a new Joint Assistant Director of Transformation post by contributing to improved collaboration. The Joint Chief of Staff will retain responsibility for delivery of the GBC Improvement Plan, and will lead on the WBC SOLACE review, and the next steps.

8.0 Consultation

- 8.1 Consultation will need to be undertaken with affected staff and the Unions, as to the creation of this new post of Joint Chief of Staff.

The Executive is requested to delegate any changes in the role as a result of consultation feedback to the Chief Executive.

- 8.2 The proposal to create a new Joint Chief of Staff has been subject to consultation with the Corporate Leadership Board and the relevant Portfolio Holder.

9.0 Key Risks

- 9.1 That the capacity of the Joint Chief Executive, Corporate Leadership Board and Joint Leadership Team is diminished by virtue of the scope of their responsibilities covering two sovereign councils; and a lack of senior support that will enable a focus on facilitating progress in delivering council priorities and plans.
- 9.2 That the Councils Joint Leadership Team lacks clarity and support by virtue of there being confusion about the purpose and scope of the GBC Head of Business Improvement post and the WBC Business Transformation Manager post.

10.0 Legal and Governance Implications

- 10.1 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 provides a power to appoint staff on such terms and conditions as appropriate.
- 10.2 Section 113 Local Government Act 1972 provides a power to a Local Authority to enter into agreement with another Local Authority to place staff at their disposal for the purposes of their functions.
- 10.3 This proposal relates to a new joint leadership post where the postholder will provide a service to both Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils. The Inter-Authority Agreement (Schedule 2, s3.3) provides that the Executive of both Councils will agree the provision of any new joint posts in excess of 12 months in term.
- 10.4 Under the Inter-Authority Agreement, the default position is that new JLT posts will be employed by Waverley Borough Council, and the costs will be shared 50:50 between the Councils.
- 10.5 In accordance with section 2(7) Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the post will be a Chief Officer by virtue of being a direct report of the Joint Chief Executive. However, the grade of the post is not expected to be aligned with other Joint Chief Officers.
- 10.5 In accordance with the Waverley Borough Council Officer Employment Procedure Rules which form part of the adopted

Constitution, the recruitment of this post, as a Chief Officer, is within the remit of the Joint Senior Staff Committee.

- 10.6 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 and the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, an offer of appointment to the Joint Chief of Staff cannot be made until statutory consultation has been undertaken by the Proper Officer with every Executive member of the Council.

11.0 Financial Implications

- 11.1 The Joint Chief of Staff postholder would be appointed on Waverley terms and conditions of employment and in accordance with the HR policy relating to the creation of joint posts. Subject to a formal job evaluation process, it is anticipated that this post will evaluate at Waverley Grade 2. Costs would be shared equally between the two Councils. It is envisaged that the total cost of the post will be £99,386 and Guildford Borough Council would therefore be responsible for approximately £49,693 per annum.
- 11.2 This post will be recruited to from 1 February 2025. The additional cost in 2024/25 for the two months of salary costs will be £8,282. This will be funded from in year savings within General Fund.
- 11.3 To fund this post, the existing Head of Business Improvement Post will be deleted. The current budget for this is £99,030, and this will result in a £49,337 saving for 2025/2026.
- 11.4 If the current postholder within the existing Head of Business Improvement is not successful in their application for this new joint role and redeployment is not possible, normal HR processes will be followed and there may be redundancy costs for GBC.

12.0 Human Resources Implications

- 12.1 The creation of this new joint post will mean the Head of Business Improvement post at GBC will be deleted and therefore redundant. This is currently filled by a permanent postholder who will be affected. It is envisaged that the postholder affected will be ringfenced to apply for the new joint post as a suitable alternative for redeployment. If they do not, or if they apply and are not successful in their application, normal HR processes will be

followed. This may include redundancy as an outcome if redeployment is not possible.

- 12.2 The proposed new Joint Chief of Staff post would be evaluated, established, approved, recruited and appointed to in accordance with the Council's interim HR Policy for the Creation of New Joint Posts, the Officer Employment Procedure Rules and all statutory requirements.

13.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

Equality and Diversity Implications have been taken into account in the HR Policy for the Interim Arrangements for new Joint Posts and in the Council's current recruitment procedures.

14.0 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

There are no direct climate change or sustainability implications.

15.0 Background Papers

- 15.1 Guildford Borough Council's Constitution
- 15.2 Guildford Borough Council's Interim HR Policy for Arrangements for new Joint Roles with Guildford Borough Council
- 15.3 Joint Chief of Staff Job Description.
- 15.4 Inter-Authority Agreement with Waverley Borough Council dated 24 October 2024

Report clearance progress:

Finance	Jo Knight	13.12.24
Legal	Susan Sale	Comments made 12 Dec 24
Human Resources	Robin Taylor	12.12.24
Chief Executive	Pedro Wrobel	12.12.24
HR	Robin Taylor	12.12.24

Consultation

Portfolio Holder	Cllr McShane	
CLB	Pedro Wrobel, Richard Bates, Susan Sale, Julian Higson, Ezra Wallace	Pedro Wrobel 11 Dec 24
Relevant Assistant Director	N/A	
Executive		Executive Briefing Meeting 18 Dec 24