



Constitution and General Purposes Committee

7th July 2022

Title	Creation of post – Assistant Director, Resident Experience and Digital
Report of	Director, Commercial and Customer Services
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix A – Role Profile: Assistant Director, Resident Experience and Digital
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Summary

This report seeks approval to establish and appoint to a new post of Assistant Director, Resident Experience and Digital, reporting to the Director, Commercial and Customer Services within the Customer and Place directorate. This post will replace the existing post of Head of Customer Strategy and Digital, which will be deleted.

Officers Recommendations

1. That the Committee approves the establishment of a new post of Assistant Director, Resident Experience and Digital.
2. That the Committee approves the deletion of the post of Head of Customer Strategy and Digital.
3. That the Committee approves the new post be graded at grade 6.

4. That the Committee note that the current postholder of Head of Customer Strategy and Digital will become the new Assistant Director, Customer Experience and Digital with effect from 1st April 2022.

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 The post of Head of Customer Strategy and Digital was established as part of the chief executive's management restructure in 2018. The post merged the previous roles of Head of IT and Head of Customer Services. At that time, the Head of IT was vacant and the merger of the posts had the effect of adding the previous roles and responsibilities of the Head of IT role into the Head of Customer Services' existing role.
- 1.2 The grade of the Head of Customer Services' post had previously been evaluated as grade 7. During the 2018 restructuring process, it was considered that the additional responsibilities associated with IT constituted "more of the same" and the new post did not, therefore, warrant re-evaluation to grade 6, which would have resulted in the post being designated as an Assistant Director.
- 1.3 Since the Head of Customer Strategy and Digital post was established, the council's approach to both resident experience and digital strategy has grown considerably, both in scale and importance. The role could previously be characterised as primarily managing the delivery of IT and customer services through the Capita contracts, with an oversight role in respect of the council's IT strategy and an expectation that the post-holder would lead strategic thinking with regard to the council's customer, digital and ICT strategies. Developments that were taking place at that time were very much focussed on getting the necessary technical infrastructure in place to drive the improvements.
- 1.4 Over the last three years, there have been three significant changes that have fundamentally shifted the focus of this role:
1. The move away from considering customer strategy and improvements in terms of the council's "front door", i.e. the contact centre and face to face facilities, towards a more holistic approach of considering end-to-end processes to ensure that they contribute to a positive resident experience. This requires the need to create and drive transformation, in terms of our approach to residents' experience, throughout the organisation and working with our partners
 2. The pandemic accelerated both the implementation of and the importance of the council's digital transformation programme, ensuring a more people-focused approach to implementing technology. Cyber attacks and associated security concerns have increased significantly over the period, requiring strong leadership to ensure an appropriate and robust approach to information security across the organisation.
 3. Whilst the acceleration to online services has worked well for some, it has created barriers for others and compounded the gaps of those that can access services and those that cannot. The council's Digital Inclusion programme has now become a strategic priority and leadership of the programme requires a partnership-led approach, working with community groups, partners such as health, the technology supply chain and across council services to ensure all our communities and staff benefit from technology and are not left behind.

- 1.5 These changes have resulted in a need for more emphasis on cross-council collaboration, more strategic direction and leadership. There is now a need to lead services across the council, to support the adoption of innovative digital approaches, and to continue to listen to our residents and engage our communities, as well as ensuring improvements are made as a result of that engagement.
- 1.6 Partnership working, with internal colleagues, external stakeholders and our communities, in an integrated and holistic way is required to ensure successful delivery of the council's priorities. To achieve this has required a leadership style embodying inclusivity and a "one council" approach to deliver more effective outcomes and be the corporate champion of the resident experience. The role now more clearly owns, defines and develops the council's resident experience and digital strategies, in their entirety, working with all stakeholders to ensure their delivery enables and benefits the council's overall priorities and the people of Barnet.
- 1.7 These changes have led to the post-holder exercising their right to request that the role profile (job description) be updated to reflect current requirements and that the grade be reviewed in accordance with the council's job evaluation scheme. This process was carried out independently by the council's HR team, in accordance with the council's policy. As a result, the post has been evaluated at grade 6, which is the council's pay grade for assistant director roles.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 The independently evaluated grade and proposed designation of the role as assistant director is considered to be commensurate with the changed nature of the role and its importance to the delivery of the council's priorities in respect of resident experience and digital inclusion. Furthermore, the implementation of the council's digital strategy is fundamental to the delivery and future development of the council's services.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 3.1 The Constitution and General Purposes Committee could choose to maintain the existing Head of Service role. This would require the post holder to revert to carrying out the duties and responsibilities of the role as it was designed in 2018, leaving a considerable gap at strategic level that would impact on delivery of the council's resident experience and digital strategies.

4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 Should the Constitution and General Purposes Committee approve the proposed creation of the new post of Assistant Director, Resident Experience and Digital, the postholder will move to the new grade and job tile with effect from 1st April 2022, in line with when the re-evaluation was carried out. The Head of Customer Strategy and Digital post will be deleted.

5. Implications of decision

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

1. The proposed new post will make a significant contribution to the council's priorities in respect of resident experience and digital inclusion.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

1. The difference between the existing staffing cost and Mid-point of grade 6 is £13,119, which can be met within the existing staff budget for the service.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

1. In accordance with Article 7 of the Council's constitution, the Constitution and General Purposes Committee has responsibility for staffing matters (i.e. salaries and conditions of services) other than those within the remit of the Chief Officer Appointment Panel.
2. The HR Regulations in the Council's constitution (Section 2.1) require that no vacant posts at assistant director level or above shall be advertised or recruited to without prior Committee approval and all new posts at assistant director level or above shall be created by Committee decision (the Constitution and General Purposes Committee, Policy and Resources Committee or Urgency Committee) and not by delegated powers.
3. In normal circumstances, once created, there would have to be an advertisement and recruitment to a new Assistant Director post. However, in the current case this is a matter of a regrading and change of job title of an existing postholder.
4. Under the terms of reference of this Committee it must approve chief officer salary packages of over £100,000. Although this is not a chief officer post it is appropriate that this should still be approved by the Committee and is in line with government guidance issued under s.40 of the Localism Act (Openness and Accountability in Local Pay) which refers to member approval for salary packages over £100,000.

5.4 Insight

1. N/A

5.5 Social Value

1. The post holder will play a key role in driving developments that support digital inclusion across the Borough.

5.6 Risk Management

1. There are no specific risks associated with approving the recommendations. However, not approving the recommendations would create a significant risk to the delivery of the council's resident experience and digital strategies.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

1. The statutory grounds of the public sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the

Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

2. The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality and day to day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.
3. The job description for the Assistant Director role has been evaluated in accordance with normal HR practice.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

1. The proposed changes have no direct impact on looked after children or care leavers.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

1. N/A

5.10 Environmental Impact

1. There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations.

6. Background papers

- 6.1 None