HR Committee

16 February 2023

Report of: Director: Workforce & Change

Title: Budget Savings Update

Ward: City Wide

Officer Presenting Report: James Brereton (Head of Human Resources)

Contact Telephone Number: 0117 92 22000

Recommendation
That the Committee notes the report.

Summary
The report updates the Committee on the potential workforce implications arising from the 2023/24 budget saving proposals.

Policy

1. Redesign of staffing structures are undertaken in line with the Council's Managing Change Policy.

Consultation

2. **Internal**
None required as this report is for information only.

3. **External**
None required as this report is for information only.

Context

4. Following public consultation on budget saving proposals, and Cabinet consideration in January, the Mayor's budget proposals will be recommended to Full Council for consideration at their at their annual budget meeting on 21 February.

5. Communication and consultation with the workforce, trade unions and staff-led groups will to continue give colleagues the opportunity to discuss how any proposed changes might affect them.

6. Where colleagues are in scope for a specific saving proposal that goes ahead following Full Council's setting of the budget, staff and trade union consultation will be undertaken in line with the Council's Managing Change Policy. Timelines for consultation will vary in line with the nature of each proposal.

7. We will be working with services to identify at the earliest possibility who might be directly impacted by the proposals. Services will be updating their Equality Impact Assessments as consultation progresses and seeking to mitigate impacts through the following:

- Recruitment controls have been in place since July 2022, including the engagement and extension and conversion of agency and fixed term workers.

- An ongoing review of funded vacancies. Those that can be left unfilled either for a period or permanently will be frozen/deleted as appropriate and others will be used as opportunities for those in redeployment.

- In both 2021/22 and 2022/23, the Succession Planning Policy has enabled managers to apply to leave the Council on a voluntary basis. This has reduced the cost of the Council's management structure and opened up development opportunities for other Council staff.

- A range of support has been made available alongside the changes, including well-being support for all colleagues, job search support for those at risk of redundancy (whether voluntary or compulsory) – refer to information below.

- Pro-active matching of redeployees (for those at risk of redundancy or medical redeployment) to Suitable Alternative Employment and support and development plans

for those redeployed to other jobs.

8. We will continue to provide support to staff through this period of change. For example:

- Colleagues who are concerned about what these changes may mean for them or their team can speak to their manager in the first instance.

- Our Health and Wellbeing team offer wellbeing support sessions for colleagues individually or as a team to talk through their concerns and help them through change - in person or remotely.

- We offer wellbeing sessions, and help with stress risk assessments

- We are offering help with interview skills and, if redeployment isn't an option, link up to training and local employment opportunities via DWP

- Colleagues can also contact access a range on online resources via the staff intranet site and our Employee Assistance Programme free of charge to speak to a trained counselling practitioner at any time. The service is confidential and colleagues don't need to speak to their manager or ask for a referral. The EAP also has an online portal which is a free and confidential service with information, advice and support on a range of topics such as stress, mental health, debt and legal issues.

Proposal

9. That the Committee notes this report.

Other Options Considered

10. None.

Risk Assessment

11. None because this report is for information only.

Public Sector Equality Duties

12a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following "protected characteristics": age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:

i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.

ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --

- remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;

- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);

- encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
- tackle prejudice; and
- promote understanding.

12b) None because this report is for information only.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal
None because this report is for information only.

Financial
(a) Revenue
(b) Capital
None because this report is for information only.

Land
Not applicable.

Personnel
None because this report is for information only.

Appendices:

Appendix A - Budget 2023/24 Equalities Impact Assessments

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
Background Papers:
None.