

**BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL
URGENT ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS
(Chief Executive)**

1. Background

As part of the ongoing Transformation of the Council and review of services to seek savings, a review has been conducted into the PA support for Directors and Chief Officers across the Council, with a view to modernising the way officers work and rationalising the number of PAs to best by introducing a 1:2 ratio and requiring Chief Officers as opposed to having a dedicated support. The report attached, prepared for Employment Committee, shows the full details.

2. Need for urgent action

Sufficient volunteers have come forward resulting in the avoidance of a situation where no compulsory redundancies will be required and no selection process will be needed. However, there will need to be an exercise to redistribute the remaining PAs to Chief Officers to ensure the structures in Appendix A of the report are achieved. This would involve a limited number of some staff transferring to a different department. Directors will be involved in the process to decide how those staff are reallocated. If the decision to make the redundancies is not made until the May Employment Committee, then the redundancies would not take place until later in the year and that reallocation exercise will be delayed. In addition, the uncertainty for all the individuals concerned will be prolonged. It is therefore proposed that the Chairman in consultation with the Chief Executive, approves the redundancies outlined in the report, to take effect from 31 May 2017. The voluntary redundancies can then be effected more swiftly and the process of reallocating PAs can begin in addition to making further savings by enacting the decision sooner.

3. Redeployment

Redeployment will continue to be sought for staff concerned and should a suitable alternative employment arise for any of the staff proposed to be made redundant, this will reduce the numbers to be made redundant.

4. Financial Implications

The cost implications to the Council are outlined in detail in the Exempt Appendix of the Employment Committee report attached.

5. Action Required

To issue redundancy notice to the posts outlined in the attached report and delete the posts with effect from 31 May 2017 shown.

To make the necessary severance payments under the terms of the Council's Severance Policy.

I have authorised the actions outlined above:

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Timothy Wheadon, Chief Executive

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Date

I confirm that I have been consulted and concur with the actions outlined above:

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Robert McLean, Chairman, Employment Committee

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Date

TO: EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

10 MAY 2017

REVIEW OF PERSONAL ASSISTANTS
Director of Corporate Services (Chief Officer: Human Resources)

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report follows a Council Wide review of the structure within the Council's Personal Assistant (PA) Support. It proposes the deletion of 5.75 PA posts on the grounds of redundancy and reduces the ratio of PA support to Chief Officers.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That approval is given to the deletion of the posts identified in Exempt Appendix B with effect from 3 August 2017 on the grounds of redundancy.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To achieve savings by reducing the number of PAs across the Council, to modernise the way senior managers work and provide role models for self reliance and 21st century ways of working.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Maintain the current level of staffing and working practice, however this would not achieve the target savings required of £100-£200k.
- 4.2 Maintain current working practices however this would not promote the 21st Century Manager from Senior Management level and the modern approach which managers across the Council will be expected to adopt.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The role of PAs was last reviewed in 2011 in a review that covered Corporate Services and Chief Executive's Office only, the outcome of that review was to introduce some sharing of PAs between Chief Officers in the Departments. Since that time the Transformation Board has been set up and is committed to review all services across the Council. The provision of PA support, whilst not included as part of the wider Transformation programme, it is necessary to review this area of support, particularly as the Council is promoting a change to the role of managers working practices to develop and transform the Council.
- 5.2 PAs and Directors / Chief Officers have been fully engaged in the review with indepth consultation and analysis of tasks undertaken by PAs, and to determine future requirements and support was required from PAs to Directors / Chief Officers.
- 5.3 An analysis of tasks undertaken by current PAs highlighted a high percentage of time spent organising and maintaining diaries and typing/formatting documents, briefing papers and presentations. In addition there was a large variety of additional tasks undertaken, including supporting other officers (which should be reduced as Managers are expected to become more self reliant), and tasks could be performed at a lower level by administrative or clerical staff.

- 5.4 The current structure gives all Directors and the Chief Executive 1:1 PA support. In addition the majority of Chief Officers have 1:1 support. As Senior Managers are expected to be more self reliant and be champions for a more modern approach to working, it was identified following the review that the current level of PA support can be reduced.
- 5.5 Following the review it is proposed that the ratio of PA support to Directors and Chief Executive will remain as 1:1 support and as those PAs are contracted to specifically to provide support to Directors and Chief Executive and there was a continued need at this level, therefore it was agreed to take them out of scope.
- 5.6 The proposals set out in this report therefore concentrate on support to Chief Officers and reduces the ratio from 1:1 support to a 1:2 ratio in Environment, Culture & Communities, Children, Young People & Learning and Adult Social Care, Health & Housing, and a 1:2.3 in Corporate Services / Chief Executive's Office.
- 5.7 The table below shows the current level of staffing and the reduction proposed

	No of Directors	No of Chief Officers	Current PA support	Future PA Support	Reduction	Ratio for Chief Officers
CEX/CS	2	7	8 (7.25 FTE)	5	2.25	1:2.3
CYPL	1	2 + 1 Acting CO	4 (3.5 FTE)	2.5	1	1:2
ASCHH	1	3	5 (4 FTE)	2.5	1.5	1:2
ECC	1	2	3	2	1	1:2

- 5.8 The revised structure charts can also be seen in Appendix A.
- 5.9 As the salary range for PAs is £22,547 to £27,407 (2017/2018 rates), the level of saving which would be achieved if the proposals are approved, would be £181k. This has been based on using the mid point of the grade plus on-costs, with a 3% vacancy factor and using the 2016/2017 pay scales as the saving targets were set in that financial year.
- 5.10 The proposed 5.75 reduction in PAs has been achieved by current staff volunteering for redundancy and compulsory selection process was not required.
- 5.11 Based on the current volunteers for redundancy and the departments they currently support, there would need to be an exercise to redistribute the remaining PAs to Chief Officers to ensure the structures in Appendix A are achieved. This would involve some staff transferring to a different department however the role of PA is one which has transferable skills and shouldn't cause too much disruption. Directors will be involved in the process to decide how those staff are reallocated.
- 5.12 It is recommended that the effective date for the new level of support is 4 August 2017 which would mean staff, if redundancy is approved at this Committee, can work out their notice periods and leave on 3 August 2017.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The relevant legal requirements for redundancies have been followed. As candidates have volunteered there should be no legal challenges or requests for reviews.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The financial implications are detailed in the report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4

Other Officers

6.5

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 PAs, Corporate Management Team and Senior Leadership Group, Recognised Trade Unions

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Face to face consultation meetings and written feedback/ consultation.

Representations Received

- 7.3 As set out within this report

Background Papers

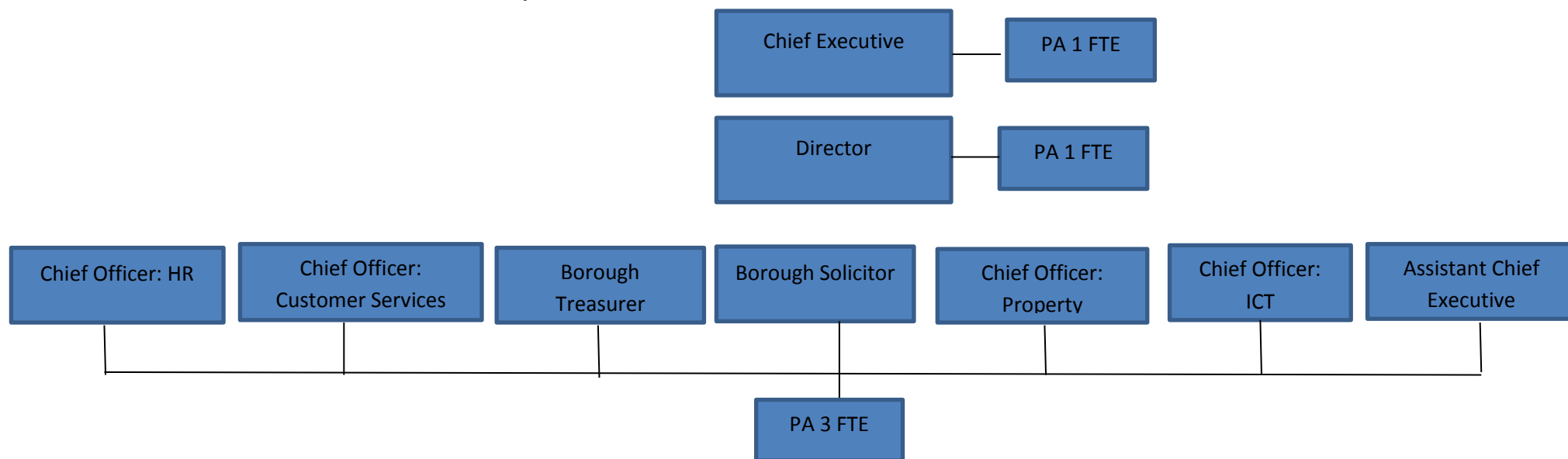
Contact for further information

Nikki Gibbons

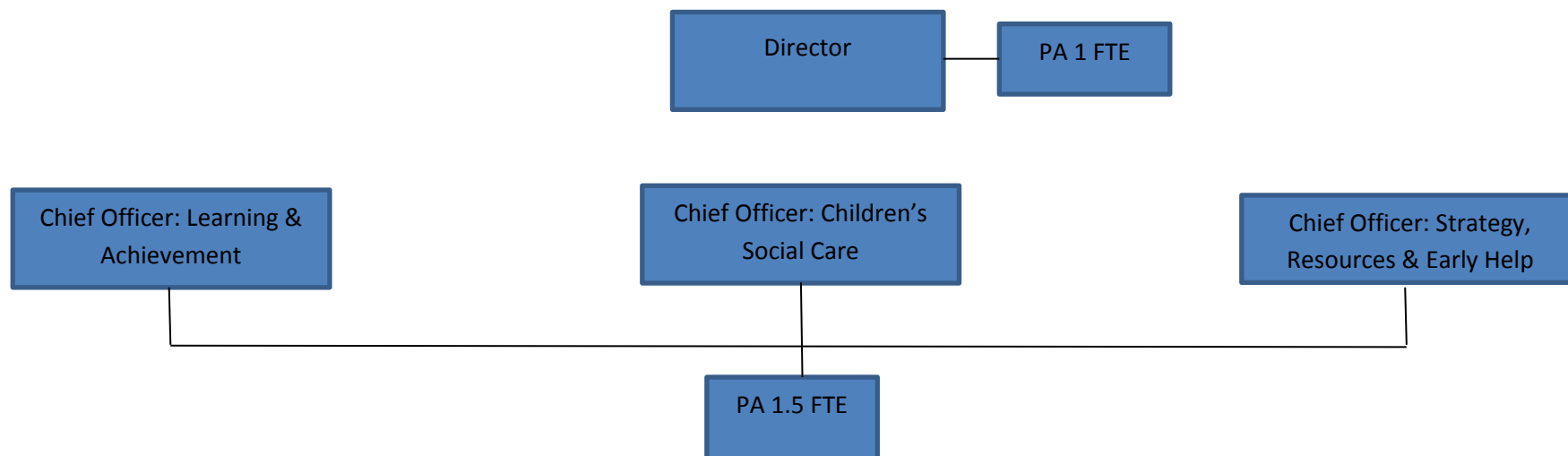
Chief Officer: Human Resources, Corporate Services - 01344 352062

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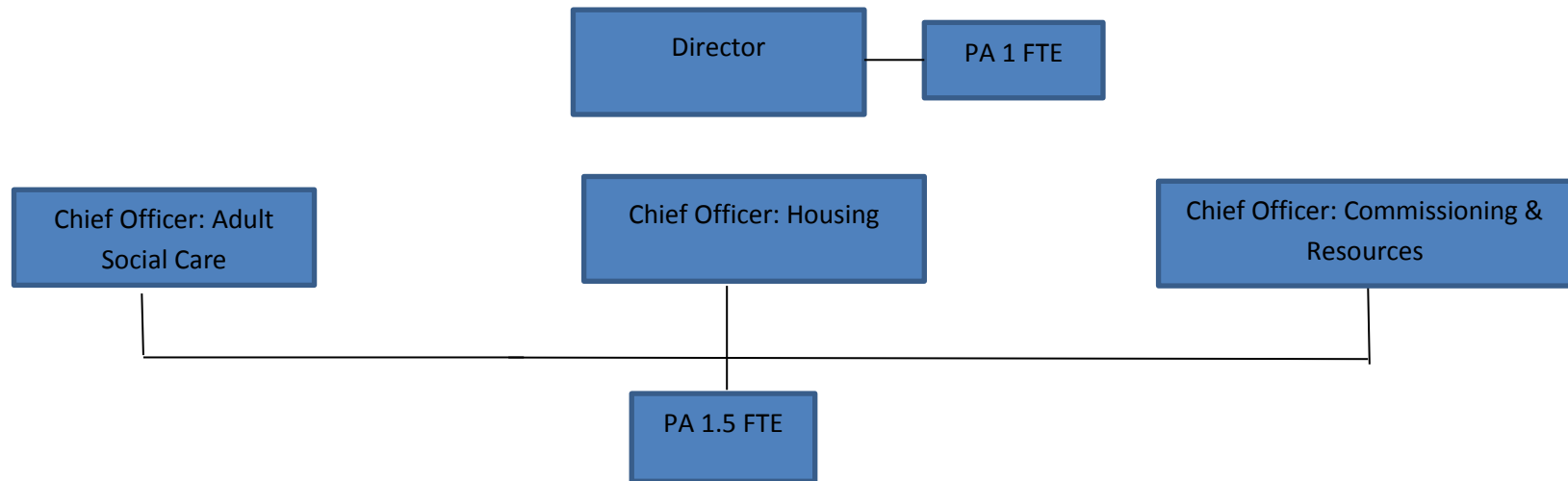
Corporate Services / Chief Executives – 5 PAs in total



Children Young People & Learning – 2.5 PAs in total



Adult Social Care, Health & Housing – 2.5 PAs in total



NB – PA support for Strategic Director of Public health and Consultant in Public Health is funded externally and is therefore out of scope and not shown above

Environment, Culture & Communities – 2 PAs in total

