

Finance – Joint Working Arrangements for Finance Services

Strategy & Resources Committee – 1st February 2022

Report of: David Ford, Chief Executive

Purpose: For Decision

Publication Status: Unrestricted

Wards affected: All

Executive Summary

At the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting on 11th January, it was agreed to implement a new finance structure as set out in Appendix A.

Following this meeting a decision was made to appoint Mark Hak-Sanders to become the new CFO and Rona Leitch has been appointed to the Senior Finance Business Partner role. Arrangements are now underway to plan the transition to the new structure and the additional appointment to the new post of Exchequer Manager.

At the meeting on 11th January a draft version of the Joint Working Agreement ('JWA') was shared with Members. It was agreed to bring the final version back to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 1st February, taking account of the changes required following approval of the new structure.

Appendix B includes the final version of the JWA for approval.

This report supports the Council's priority of:

Building a better Council – making the Council financially sustainable and providing residents with the best possible services.

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Recommendation to Committee

That:

- A. subject to the agreement of Surrey County Council, the Joint Working Agreement for Finance Services with Surrey County Council ('SCC'), attached at Appendix B, be approved; and
 - B the Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer be authorised to arrange for the Joint Working Agreement to be executed on behalf of the Council.
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Reason for Recommendation

The Council is in a partnership with SCC to deliver finance services to TDC. The proposal is to approve the Joint Working Agreement reflecting the new finance structure previously agreed by the Committee on 11th January.

Other Options Considered

If the JWA is not approved, this would require further negotiation with SCC.

Consultation

Discussion has been undertaken through the Member Reference Group with Group leaders, the Chair of Strategy and Resources, the Chief Executive, Head of Legal Services and the current Chief Finance Officer.

Key Implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

The Chief Finance Officer is fully supportive of the proposed approach.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

The Local Government Act 1972 (s.113) allows a local authority to enter into an agreement with another authority to place its officers at the disposal of the other authority. Entering into a Joint Working Agreement will regularise the increasing collaboration that is taking place between the Council and Surrey County Council in respect of the Finance team and give legal status to the relationship thus providing the Councils with clarity and a certain amount of protection.

The Joint Working Agreement sets out the governance relationship between the Councils and cover important matters, for example, funding, termination, dispute resolution, insurance.

There is now a need to formalise the Agreement so that important aspects of the arrangements can be given legal status thus protecting the interests of both Councils.

Equality

It is not foreseen that there are any direct equality implications as a result of the recommendations in this Report. Options will be rigorously assessed as the TFT plan progresses.

Climate Change

There are no significant environmental / sustainability implications associated with this report.

Background Papers

Report to Strategy & Resources Committee, 11th January 2022.

Appendices

Appendix A – new finance structure, as agreed by the S&R Committee on 11th January 2022

Appendix B - Joint Working Agreement for Finance with SCC

APPENDIX 1

