

COUNCIL MEETING – 16 SEPTEMBER 2010

Recommendation to Council from the General Purposes Committee held on 24 August 2010

Minute No Members considered a report regarding the appointment to the new post of Head of Legal and Democratic Services, and the designation of that post as Monitoring Officer to the Council. The report reminded Members that, at the Committee's meeting on 10 February 2010, consideration was given to proposals for the appointment of all posts below Director level to be the responsibility of Directors with the exception of the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer. At that point the revised senior management structures were still being finalised. Members noted that subsequently, following the decision of the Appointments Sub-Committee on 13 May 2010 not to appoint to the post of Assistant Director (Governance)/Monitoring Officer, the Director of Customer and Shared Services had carried out a further structural review.

The meeting was advised that the review had concluded that the post of Assistant Director (Governance)/Monitoring Officer should be deleted and Head of Service roles in that area be reviewed and reconfigured. Further, it was now proposed that the Monitoring Officer role be carried out at Head of Service level in the form of a new post of Head of Legal and Democratic Services which would report directly to the Director of Customer and Shared Services.

Members noted that the appointment to the post of Head of Legal and Democratic Services would be made by the Appointment Sub-Committee but the designation of the post as Monitoring Officer, as a statutory post, would need to be agreed by full Council.

In response some concern was expressed that the Monitoring Officer role might be weakened by appointing at the Head of Service level as this could fail to reflect the significant level of responsibility exercised. In addition concern was expressed that, at Head of Service level, the officer could lack authority, especially when dealing with complaints against a Director. However, the Acting Assistant Director, People explained that the importance of the post was fully recognised which was why it would report directly to the Director of Customer and Shared Services. He added that the Appointments Sub-Committee would ensure that the applicant with the necessary skills, abilities and experience was appointed.

A Member reminded the Committee of the possible abolition of the Standards regime and the resulting emphasis on the role of the Monitoring Officer.

Following a suggestion by a Member the Acting Assistant Director, People undertook to discuss the possibility of emphasising the importance of the role played by the Monitoring Officer by placing the post of Head of Legal and Democratic Services directly alongside that of the Director of Customer and Shared Services on the Directorate's organisational chart.

RECOMMENDED to Council

that the post of Head of Legal and Democratic Services be designated as Monitoring Officer and report directly to the Director of Customer and Shared Services.

NOTED

that, as set out in paragraph 8.1 of Part E2 of the Council's Constitution, the appointment to the post of Head of Legal and Democratic Services will be made by the Appointments Sub-Committee.

[Please note that a copy of the report can be found on the Central Bedfordshire Council web site at the following link:

[http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/Published/C00000617/M00003542/AI00020434/\\$DesignationofMonitoringOfficerV2.docA.ps.pdf](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/modgov/Published/C00000617/M00003542/AI00020434/$DesignationofMonitoringOfficerV2.docA.ps.pdf)