



**Report for Spelthorne Borough Council
Corporate Establishment Review – 14 June 2023
Confidential**

The Brief

I have been asked by the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee, Spelthorne Borough Council (SBC) 16 January 2023 to review the effectiveness of existing organisational structure, functions, roles and responsibilities to deliver the Council's Corporate Priorities with a view to establishing potential efficiency savings by undertaking the following:

1. Review the organisational structure and consider realignment of services under the senior management team.
2. Consider current vacant posts and impact on relevant service areas if vacant posts were to be removed from the establishment.
3. Review use of all temporary staff including interims and consultants.
4. Review rate of recruitment and retention.
5. Consider any recommendations from staff audits and Peer Reviews.
6. Consider scope for creating shared services with other local authorities.
7. Consider scope for making staff efficiency savings by automating services and progressing digital transformation.
8. Consider feedback from member and staff surveys regarding capacity issues.

The above areas do not specify any particular focus required or aspects of concern. I have therefore taken into account the Council's Corporate Plan 2021/23 to understand the SBC priorities and published expectations of councillors and communities. The stated vision of the Council's leadership - Councillors and Chief Officers, are relevant in achieving the Council's aspirations.

The Corporate Plan 2021/23 makes reference to the unprecedented impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and the pivotal role played by SBC staff and management to respond to the crisis and assist the most vulnerable people, as well as provide support across communities. The significant role undertaken here by SBC staff during highly challenging circumstances is well documented.

Appendix B

Council priorities identified include:

- Community - Building strong relationships with communities and businesses, providing a safe and inclusive environment.
- Affordable housing – meeting housing needs across all sections of communities.
- Recovery - A 'Recovery Action Plan', in response to longer term effects and impacts of the pandemic, managing commercial investments and assets, stimulating economic recovery, building back income streams, resilience and new ways of living and working.
- Environment - tackling threats by responding to the climate emergency, protect biodiversity, support green initiatives and be a sustainable Council through energy efficiencies.
- Service Delivery - to improve lives as well as achieve aspirations for the future through efficient, effective, responsive and flexible service provision.

Council Values reflect behaviours expected from staff and councillors in having pride in the council as service providers to their communities; being responsive; accountable; providing value for money, acting with integrity, being dependable and empowering others.

I will refer to the above where relevant in the areas under review.

1. Review the organisational structure and consider realignment of services under the senior management team.

Background

- 1.1 In 2015, SBC conducted a programme of major transformation, 'Towards a Sustainable Future' (TaSF). This was in anticipation of additional significant financial challenges faced by SBC and many local authorities. This included the anticipated cessation of most central government general grant support, and significant reductions in central government grants, which would be on-going.
- 1.2 SBC recognised the need to plan to become self-sustaining through income from council tax, business rates apportionment, fees and charges, and assets. Additional cost pressures identified included such areas as housing and pensions costs. This places an increased reliance on Council assets to increase housing supply and generate rental income.
- 1.3 This transformation programme focused on three key areas:
 - Structure review
 - Income generation
 - More efficient working
- 1.4 TaSF Structure review 2015/16 – for more efficient alignment of political and managerial accountabilities to achieve improvements was achieved by:
 - alignment and synergies for service and support functions and between stakeholders
 - looking for opportunities to build resilience
 - savings – to include mitigation for high priority areas
 - exploring a range of delivery models

Appendix B

1.5 Income generation - from 2016 onwards income generation was achieved by:

- Acquisition of investment assets
- Relocation of office accommodation to release site for development for affordable housing and rent generation to ease pressures on Homelessness Revenue budget was proposed. However, this was not agreed to by SBC councillors so the project had to be downsized. Reduced efficiency savings were then sought through 'Project Lima'
- Built up significant investment portfolio

1.6 Other efficiency savings – Project Lima

These were found through relocation and efficiencies by more agile, flexible and efficient ways of working by SBC staff, achieved by:

- Consolidating space resulting in 43% office space saving, hot-desking, collaborative working
- upgrading ICT
- energy efficiency measures

Organisational structure and services

1.7 Under TaSF, senior management posts were reduced, and service areas were realigned. Joint ventures were explored with other councils, for example, to deliver emergency planning and business continuity functions across a number of partner organisations. This resulted in the development of Applied Resilience (emergency planning and business continuity) with Runnymede Borough Council.

1.8 Key aims were to:

- Achieve synergies
- Improve resilience
- Deliver savings
- Consider new delivery models

1.9 It was noted that the earlier structure review achieved savings through deleting senior manager posts.

1.10 Emphasis was placed on achieving greater strategic focus and being 'fit for the future'. Two Deputy Chief Executive posts managed the new roles of Group Heads who, in turn, managed professional, operational and service areas.

1.11 For greater resilience, and to reduce silo working, the roles of Deputy Chief Executive were generic with joint management of the Group Heads, developing a 'one team approach'. One Deputy Chief Executive also holds the statutory role of Section 151 Officer. At that time, the creation of five new Group Head posts were to replace a larger number of former Head of Service posts.

1.12 In addition, increased flexibility and resilience was provided through proposed partnership working with neighbouring local authorities as an option, should posts not be appointed to.

1.13 Senior posts were moved from Local Government Services (LGS) 'Green Book' terms and conditions to Joint National Council (JNC) Chief Officer terms and conditions as part of creating new salary scales. This reflected increased levels of responsibilities and enabled additional

Appendix B

cover to be provided outside 'normal' working hours as part of the role, such as attending evening meetings.

- 1.14 The further statutory role of Monitoring Officer, reporting to the Chief Executive, is the Group Head Corporate Governance. The Deputy Chief Executives also report to the Chief Executive.
- 1.15 Group Heads report to the Deputy Chief Executives. Their responsibilities are mainly outward, community and business-focused, designed to be fit for the future:
- Commissioning & Transformation
 - Neighbourhood Services
 - Regeneration & Growth (post restructured in January 2023 and replaced with 'Place, Protection and Prosperity')
 - Community Wellbeing
 - Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer (from 2020)
 - Assets (established to maintain focus on the Council's assets programme and recognise the importance of this area - from 2023)
- 1.16 Internal-focused posts, necessary for ensuring compliance, governance and scrutiny are the Group Head, Governance & Monitoring and the Chief Accountant.
- 1.17 The Group Head Commissioning & Transformation contains a number of internally focused professions such as Human Resources; Information & Communications Technology; Information Governance, Projects / Transformation and Data Protection.
- 1.18 The most recent revised Senior Manager Structure Chart, March 2023, **Appendix A**, evidences further steps taken by SBC to align related services. Customer Services moved to Commissioning and Transformation. The Deputy Group Head post previously running the service was removed. Building Control and Environmental Health realigned under the Group Head of Place, Protection and Prosperity. A new Head of Assets was appointed to maintain focus on the Council's Assets Programme.
- 1.19 The most recent Senior Manager structure chart reflects revisions or additional areas of responsibility that have been added to Group Head portfolios since 2015. These additional areas are:

Commissioning & Transformation:

- Climate Change
- Customer Services
- Information Governance / Data Protection

Group Head Corporate Governance

- Procurement
- Committee Services

Neighbourhood Services

- Waste & Recycling Strategy

Appendix B

- 1.20 'Asset Management' has become a stand alone Group taking over 'assets' and 'facilities management'. This recognises the strategic importance to the Council, and the extent of workload this area generates. A new Group Head for Asset Management has recently taken up post. It would be normal practice to review the structure within Assets in due course to ensure that requirements for the future of this area of work are appropriately resourced.
- 1.21 Assets became more aligned with Finance, with both sections now reporting to the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, to realise additional synergies.
- 1.22 Additional areas of responsibility for Group Head Place, Protection and Prosperity, are:
- Environmental Health
 - Building Control
- 1.23 This demonstrates on-going realignments of the management team to enhance efficiencies since 2015. The programme of transformation is continuing.

Spans of control and management reporting lines

- 1.24 I have reviewed information provided by councils on their websites regarding spans of control and number of posts managed by Tier 1 and Tier 2 managers. **(Appendix B)** The information provided is broad but provides a basis for comparison. There are some differentials between councils, for example, where the Head of Paid Service is also a Corporate Director and manages discrete business areas as well as Tier 2 managers (Canterbury, Dartford).
- 1.25 The number of direct reports to Tier 1 varies from 2 to 8 across the region, and SBC sits at 5.
- 1.26 Three senior managers directly report to the Chief Executive - two Deputy Chief Executives and one Group Head (Monitoring Officer), of whom two are Statutory Officers. The Head of Communications and Customer Experience is not a senior post but reports to the Chief Executive due to the nature of this work.
- 1.27 The number of professional areas and services reporting to the Group Heads at SBC range from two to nine. Each Group Head has a significant number of professional or service areas to manage in comparison with other local authorities listed.
- 1.28 The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services is also a Director of Spelthorne Direct Services (SDS), which was established as a commercial waste company, wholly owned by SBC. The Chief Accountant is also a Director for SDS. This is an area with potential to expand and diversify.
- 1.29 The Council created Knowle Green Estates Ltd (KGE Ltd) as a housing company, to help provide new homes for local residents. It is controlled by the Council and provides the specific tools and skills needed to manage a portfolio of housing.
- 1.30 KGE Ltd also manages the residential properties, lettings and tenant agreements that the Council develops. The company's primary purpose is to help the Council meet the housing needs of local residents by managing a range of different types of housing, including affordable rented and private rented accommodation and key worker homes.

Appendix B

Working across Council boundaries

- 1.31 SBC provides family support for three boroughs with a total population of 300,000. This successful partnership has been in place for over a decade. This service is commissioned by Surrey County Council (SCC) who passport Government Funding. SCC is currently evaluating how it wishes to commission the service from April 2024, which may mean from that point borough councils will cease to be involved in the delivery of the service.
- 1.32 SBC provides other services on behalf of neighbouring authorities and works in partnership with a number of external organisations. The Council continues to look for ways to share services and work in partnership with other local authorities to deliver efficiencies and more effective ways of working.
- 1.33 Neighbourhood Services is one area that is impacted by external factors that are outside the Council's control. An example is the recent ending of the agency agreement in March 2023 with Surrey County Council (SCC) for grass cutting and on-street parking.
- 1.34 The loss of ground maintenance did not affect SBC financially as, until that time, SBC had subsidised the grass cutting to achieve a better quality of service to their communities. Also, SBC provided grounds maintenance services to Runnymede Council until March 2023. The quality of future services to SBC communities in these areas will now be outside SBC control.
- 1.35 Whilst the service was not designed to generate income for the Council as the focus was on providing high quality, it demonstrated the ability for councils to collaborate and work across boundaries.
- 1.36 Surrey County Council ended the parking agency agreement having decided to contract with one company to undertake on street parking enforcement across the whole of Surrey.
- 1.37 The loss of on-street car parking has impacted on SBC similarly in that service plans had to be revised accordingly resulting in the loss of one member of staff through TUPE and some staff were lost through resignation or were offered alternative employment. The longer-term impacts of the transfer are currently being evaluated by the Council.

Summary comments

- 1.38 *Having reviewed the 2015 structure and ongoing revisions to the 2023 structure, it is clear that the Council structure is not static, there is on-going review and realignment. The number of posts and spans of control at the senior level are not out of sync with other comparable local authorities (as shown in **Appendix B**).*
- 1.39 *A number of key projects being managed through the senior structure are reflected in the Corporate Plan - the ultra-low energy efficient Spelthorne Leisure Centre; energy efficient measures in Council buildings and housing developments, delivering a Climate Change Strategy; accelerated green initiatives.*
- 1.40 *SBC's response to housing challenges includes building their own housing and managing their residential properties (Knowle Green Estates Ltd); working with providers and private sector partners to promote housing development to meet community needs; management of the Council's commercial investments and assets to provide a consistent income stream to support sustainable services, through an Economic Recovery Plan.*

Appendix B

- 1.41 *The restructuring of Finance has enabled SBC to fill positions with permanent staff and develop talent through the creation of two apprentice posts.*
- 1.42 *Assets and Finance have been brought closer together by aligning both areas under the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer.*
- 1.43 *I have found no areas that I could suggest would benefit from further re-alignment within the Senior Manager structure that are not already being reviewed, or where changes are currently underway. SBC is not an organisation that shows complacency in its structure, nor in its focus on achieving the stated priorities in the Corporate Plan.*

2. Consider current vacant posts and impact on relevant service areas if vacant posts were to be removed from the establishment.

- 2.1 The Management Team proposed, and the Council endorsed a moratorium on new posts being added to the Budget (unless a statutory requirement or fully externally funded) for the year 23/24. It will be considered by the new Council as to whether this moratorium is extended. I have been advised that discussions were held with Group Heads about vacant posts and whether it was necessary to keep them as part of reviewing the establishment.
- 2.2 I have reviewed a 'snapshot' of vacant posts as at 19 May 2023. Clearly, this will change as new posts become vacant and others are recruited to, or where roles covered by alternative means.
- 2.3 Each vacant post listed is identified by its status and consideration of next steps regarding that vacancy to maintain service delivery, under the following descriptors:
- Currently being advertised
 - Plan to recruit
 - Recruitment in progress
 - Filled by an interim
 - Covered by a casual post
 - Covered by an agency worker
 - Covered by agency worker whilst considering options for a shared service
 - Unable to recruit - budget to be used for contractor
 - Failed to recruit a number of times
 - On hold – recruitment to be decided
- 2.4 The following areas are of particular note regarding type of vacant posts currently:
- 2.5 Data Protection
Information Governance Co-ordinator. This post is the only post listed as receiving a market supplement due to recruitment having failed a number of times.
- 2.6 Independent Living
A number of posts providing direct services to the community, normally sourced locally, are listed as vacant including:
- Drivers
 - Kitchen staff

Appendix B

2.7 Planning

Planning Officers – Planning is widely recognised across local authorities as hard to fill, mainly due to attractive salary packages offered by private sector organisations. It is hard for local authorities to compete in this market without providing additional supplements. This is an on-going drain on experience and expertise in this area.

2.8 Customer Services

Are about to go through a re-structure (final structure to be agreed) and therefore those posts are not listed.

2.9 Assets

Following the appointment of the new Group Head, a review of the structure will be underway and will be subject to the normal process of consultation.

2.10 Legal

It has been consistently difficult to recruit to Legal professionally qualified posts.

2.11 Neighbourhood Services

Posts in Neighbourhood Services are listed as ‘carried vacancies’ even though they are mainly filled with agency workers for the express purpose of achieving greater flexibility in ensuring cover for critical front-line posts. This planned arrangement has been found to reduce the cost of carrying high levels of sickness, or other absence, previously experienced. These areas include:

- Hall Caretakers
- Support Worker/Driver
- Parks & Grounds Maintenance operatives (various roles)
- Street Cleansing Operatives
- Refuse Collection Operatives

2.12 Drivers are in short supply across all areas and many organisations at a national level. SBC has a shift of drivers. I understand from the Head of Neighbourhoods that most drivers employed are elderly, but reliable; they like the job as it is familiar to them, and that they enjoy working for SBC.

2.13 Reasons for people in Neighbourhood Services leaving are commonly cited as ‘*pay being insufficient*’. This is a recognised factor in comparison with other local authorities. However, non-monetary aspects of working for SBC being seen to be ‘a good employer’, are also recognised. This is helpful in maintaining service delivery in these circumstances.

Summary comments

2.14 *The importance of having a well trained and motivated workforce, the ability to recruit and retain suitably qualified people with support and development to undertake their roles effectively, and addressing staff pressures and needs are referenced in the Corporate Plan. SBC works to recruit, retain and support suitably qualified people as they are core to the functioning of all aspects of the Council’s work. This investment is on-going, as evidenced by induction and training programmes in place such as Continuous Performance Management (CPM) process and the provision of a Shared Learning Programme (SLP).*

Appendix B

- 2.15 *The Corporate Plan refers to ensuring all services can be delivered to cater for all sections of their communities, specifying that the Council will resist any change in structure which would erode the quality of service available to communities.*
- 2.16 *I have noted that there is currently a moratorium on adding new full time equivalent posts to the budget. This area of vacancy management is currently under scrutiny.*
- 2.17 *Given the publicly expressed importance of SBC staff in the Corporate Plan, any suggestion that any post that becomes vacant could simply be removed from the establishment would be a rather crude tactical approach to workforce planning and achieving cost-efficiencies. Such an approach, in isolation, is unlikely to be in the interests of the public for maintaining public sector services and would be counter-productive and costly.*
- 2.18 *Information has been provided to me that demonstrates management control over vacancy administration, that options are being considered, with a focus on achieving efficiencies not only in cost but in the management of resources. Reviews are on-going as evidenced in the responses to the loss of contracts, or the creative use of agency or interim staff to meet defined needs. A recent review has been undertaken of the Market Supplement Policy and is on-going for the Retention Allowance Policy.*
- 2.19 *I have found no justification, or any business rationale, for arbitrarily removing posts once they become vacant.*

3. Review use of all temporary staff including interims and consultants.

Temporary Staff

- 3.1 Use of temporary staff has been commented on in Section 2 above.

Agency staff

Neighbourhood Services

- 3.2 There is a high level of planned agency staff in Neighbourhood Services mainly for reasons of flexibility, seasonality of some areas of work, and cost of sickness absence of operatives needed for crewing.
- 3.3 The workforce is ageing, and people are remaining in work longer. Work in these frontline service areas is mainly manual / physical, unsocial hours, and requires levels of fitness. This places higher demands on health and attendance at work. These factors necessitate the use of agency workers to ensure availability of crewing for high-profile front-line services direct to communities, and to achieve cost efficiencies.
- 3.4 A minimal number of extra posts are purposefully carried on the establishment so that agency staff can be called upon as and when needed at short notice to ensure operational cover is maintained to deliver front line services. This provides greater flexibility to move operatives to where they are needed, rather than people being in fixed posts unable to provide this cover. This optimises available resources.

Appendix B

- 3.5 A further benefit of the use of agency staff is the opportunity to review attendance and performance over a 12-week period. SBC has an option to offer employment to suitable individuals without incurring a 'finders fee' from the agency. This appears to work well for both the Council and individuals, is a reliable means to assess suitability (for both parties), with a greater likelihood of success in retaining good employees.

Contractors

- 3.6 The list provided to me in May 2023 identifies a small number of senior contractors in professional areas. They are generally recognised across local authorities as being skills shortage areas and hard to recruit to:

- Assets -1 Property Manager and 2 Development Managers.
- Commissioning & Transformation - 1 in Customer Services (agency)
- Procurement - 1 Procurement Manager
- Legal - 3 Solicitors
- Environmental Health - 1
- Planning - 1

Summary comments:

- 3.7 *Use of interims and contractors provides flexibility as and when needed. It does not provide individuals with service continuity due to the temporary nature of this engagement. This is not an ideal solution long term as will become costly given the higher fees incurred.*
- 3.8 *The value of using contractors for a defined period of time is that high level, expert skills can be brought in to focus immediately on key projects, or the management of particular professions where gaps have been identified. This is normally over the short to medium term for a particular purpose, when that arrangement concludes.*
- 3.9 *Reasons to use contractors are normally to allow time for consideration to be given to revisions to structures, where time is critical and expert input required, or a key post simply cannot be recruited to. Whilst the employment costs are likely to be higher initially, reflecting the short term nature of a contractor, the cost of not covering this work, or the cost and time to repeatedly advertise when there is no prospect of success, is likely to be costly also.*
- 3.10 *Use of temporary staff to cover posts that would otherwise be recruited to, and retained, will be costly if turnover is high. Existing resources are expended to induct and train on local systems and practices. The time lag before full productivity, then an early exit because the salary, or the work environment, is unattractive, is disruptive to service delivery and staff morale.*
- 3.11 *It is apparent that SBC is experiencing difficulties in recruitment and retention in some areas, for reasons outlined in Section 5 below (mainly related to comparatively low pay, difficult working relationships between some councillors and officers impacting on the wider work environment, as reflected in the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge), therefore this necessitates short term, or interim, cover to help manage the vacancies and maintain service delivery in accordance with the Corporate Plan.*

4. Review rate of recruitment and retention.

Market challenges

- 4.1 Proximity to London presents SBC with additional challenges regarding salary differentials and impacts on recruitment and retention, particularly in some professional areas. Other local authorities, as well as the private sector, are also competing for the same scarce resources.
- 4.2 Since the Covid-19 pandemic and new ways of working being developed, particularly remote working, a pattern of hybrid working has become a significant part of working patterns across employers in all sectors. The additional flexibility and attractiveness of including more flexible working arrangements, where appropriate, has become a major factor in positively influencing recruitment and retention opportunities for all employers, particularly in skills shortage areas.

Salary differentials – SBC and other borough and district councils in Southeast

- 4.3 I have conducted a benchmarking exercise of salaries of Tiers 1 – 3 posts in 26 district or borough councils across the Southeast region, including 9 Surrey councils. Further commentary together with pay data across councils reflecting the salaries of senior managers is provided in **Appendices C and D**.
- 4.4 The data has been taken from pay policies or Statements of Accounts 2022/23 published by local authorities reflecting basic salary levels. Any additional allowances or supplements are not provided for in these salary figures.
- 4.5 Whilst pay data for 2022/23 is relatively limited, as many councils have not yet published their latest senior manager pay data, there is sufficient 2022/23 data to form a view for comparison. Ultimately, pay benchmarking is relative for comparator purposes.
- 4.6 In addition, I have also provided a brief overview of salaries from 2021/22 data for broader comparator purposes. This reflects SBC being in the lower quartile across tiers 1-3 compared to other comparable councils.
- 4.7 Population factors and sizes based on the latest mid-year population estimates (ONS.gov.uk) have been taken into consideration.
- 4.8 This data reflects that salaries being offered elsewhere are sufficiently higher than SBC to create additional challenges of losing experienced and valued employees for higher pay. This is in addition to reported other reasons including improved career opportunities, or working relationships with the political leadership. (References taken from SBC staff exit interviews and LGA Peer Challenge report).
- 4.9 I have provided some wider salary information from Cendex, a national database which provides live salary data filtered by levels, industries and geography (National, London, Southeast). This gives an overview of other market factors which may be of interest to SBC. **(Appendix D)**

Tier 1 Chief Executive
Tier 2 Deputy Chief Executive. Monitoring Officer
Tier 3 Group Heads and Chief Accountant

Appendix B

Spelthorne BC Policies to support recruitment and retention

- 4.10 A '**Recruitment Allowance**' may be applied to new staff based on up to 10% of grade, with a repayment schedule of over 3 years to incentivise staff to remain for a period of time.
- 4.11 The **Retention Allowance Scheme** allows for a payment to be made for the following reasons:
- **'Hard to fill' areas or professions.**
This may be due to national or regional shortages. Such allowances will be made for a year based on evidence submitted to the Management Team. This will be 5% of the post SCP and only applicable if in post for 2+ years, and subject to satisfactory performance and attendance.
 - **One off payments to complete key projects**
Linked to delivery of key priorities up to 5% of SCP and paid on completion of agreed objectives.
 - **Loyalty payments linked to closure of services in case of redundancy**
To ensure completion of services due to close during time of change. Conditions will apply.
- 4.12 **Market Supplements** for attraction and retention in hard to fill positions is one option the Council is using to mitigate some of this impact and maintain resilience for on-going service delivery.
- 4.13 This provides a 'retention payment' for use in exceptional circumstances where posts are hard to fill and there is evidence that there is a national or regional shortage of those particular professions or occupations, or where salaries are significantly below the 'market rate' affecting recruitment or retention. Decisions are based on business cases being submitted by managers against defined criteria.
- 4.14 Comparator samples are used for benchmarking and defining an appropriate level of 'Market Supplement'. Market supplements are reviewed within at least 3 years of implementation to ensure that the justification remains.
- 4.15 The Market Supplement Policy has been updated to ensure a transparent and consistent process to fit future requirements and demands.

Staff Exit interviews – reasons for leaving

- 4.16 The most common stated reasons for SBC staff leaving are retirement and moving elsewhere for promotion or to a higher paid job. The next is lack of career development. There is mention of issues with councillors, difficulties working from home as a result of the pandemic, and lack of appraisals/feedback (some of the forms date back to 2018). The appraisal system has since been reviewed and replaced with a CPM (Continuous Performance Management) system in 2022 which managers and staff are now using.
- 4.17 One comment in the exit interview summary stated that a reason for leaving was due to poor working relationships between councillors and officers and how it made that person feel:

'One of the reasons for leaving was the attitude/relationship between councillors and officers Whilst councillors have rarely been difficult with me, it is uncomfortable to see the way some councillors speak to officers, or about officers, in meetings and is becoming worse. I

Appendix B

feel they must have little understanding of officers' workload generally as the demands they make on officers are often unrealistic and often show a lack of respect'.

Summary comments:

- 4.18 *SBC's response to Covid provided evidence of its adaptability and a high level of resilience in how the Council was able to deploy staff at short notice, transition to remote working and continue to deliver services.*
- 4.19 *Hybrid working is now a positive legacy arising from a highly impactful and unexpected pandemic situation. It has assisted in building resilience in maintaining staffing levels and developing new ways of working to achieve greater efficiencies and resilience for the future. It is noted that this flexibility of hybrid, or remote working has enabled SBC to retain the services and skills of key staff who have relocated to a different part of the country.*
- 4.20 *The offer of hybrid, or remote, working where this is appropriate, is now a normal offer made by most employers as part of the package to attract and retain key skills in an increasingly competitive recruitment market where geography does not present boundaries. Clearly this is not appropriate for all roles and will be managed to ensure that the needs of the services delivered are met efficiently.*
- 4.21 *Partnership working in sectors of the community, businesses, health and other local authorities was recognised as a strength for the Council by the LGA. Successful partnership or collaborative working depends on the potential parties being positive and constructive, and this is not always forthcoming from potential partners.*
- 4.22 *These policies are reviewed regularly. The principles remain sound in my view, particularly given the volatile nature of local government and services to be delivered or withdrawn. The policies listed here are found across local authorities who are grappling with similar issues of struggling to recruit and retain particular professions or operational / frontline staff.*

5. Consider any recommendations from staff audits and Peer Reviews.

November 2022 - LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

- 5.1 The Peer Challenge team comprised 2 current or former Leaders, a Chief Executive, 2 Strategic Directors, a Director and a Peer Challenge Manager from the LGA, acting as a 'critical friend' to the Council as '*fellow local government officers and members*'.
- 5.2 Key themes from a peer challenge focus on:
- Whether the Council is delivering effectively on its priorities
 - Leadership (councillors and senior management) internally and externally
 - Governance and scrutiny arrangements
 - Robustness of financial planning and management
 - Capacity to improve.

Appendix B

5.3 In addition, SBC sought input regarding:

- The Corporate Plan
- Delivery of affordable housing
- Governance issues recognising that the new committee system appeared to impact adversely on the speed of decision-making, and
- The working of overview and scrutiny.

5.4 The LGA Peer Challenge commended SBC for *'many unique things of which (SBC) can be proud'*. Particular mention was made of being an exemplar with their *'brilliant'* response to the Covid pandemic; their preparedness, creativity, leadership and foresight in supporting residents, communities and vulnerable people throughout this period. (Peer Challenge Report S4 - Feedback).

5.5 The *'admirable'* response to the pandemic by staff and management was attributed by the LGA Peer Challenge team to *'clear leadership, prioritisation, a committed and hard-working staff responding to the needs'* of their communities. There was reference to this being followed up with a **'Recovery Action Plan'**. (Peer Challenge Report S4 - Feedback).

5.6 The LGA Peer Challenge cited *'strong and positive relationships and partnership working across sectors'* (reflected in the Corporate Plan), by the Chief Executive as a visible strength that helped shape, and deliver, priorities effectively.

5.7 Broader consultation with community partners, stronger, clearer political direction and greater visibility of councillors was recommended. It was also noted that the Council could achieve even more *'with a cohesive functioning councillor cohort... which it recognisably does not have at this present time'*. (Peer Challenge Report S4 - Feedback).

5.8 The LGA Peer Challenge team suggested that there was *'an opportunity for councillors to develop a clearer strategic vision for the future rather than spending so much time internally (politically) focused in the 'here and now''*. (Peer Challenge Report S4 - Feedback).

5.9 There was reference to *'poor behaviour'* by a small number of councillors towards each other and staff, widely recognised as *'damaging the Council's reputation, staff morale, recruitment and retention...'*. (Peer Challenge Report S4 - Feedback).

5.10 The Council was seen by partners as being *'commercially minded', 'entrepreneurial' and 'community focused'*. However, it was noted that potential benefits appeared to have been lost through delays in decision-making by councillors, which in turn deprives the community of the benefits that could be realised. This contributes to frustrations, and a lack of trust, between councillors and officers. (Peer Challenge Report S4 - Feedback).

5.11 It was noted that officers could provide clearer financial, economic and wider implications of decisions in reports to councillors to assist them in their decision-making, so they fully appreciate the financial implications of decision-making, or of not making decisions. (Peer Challenge Report S4 - Feedback).

5.12 A number of discretionary services and initiatives were listed by the Peer Challenge team, together with the passion and good will of staff to deliver, and awards and recognition received. It was noted that it would be a significant risk *'if councillors remain entrenched in adversarial and negative approaches towards senior managers, then these are likely to be*

Appendix B

early areas to be cut as the on-going viability of delivering these services may be questionable’. (Peer Challenge Report para 4.1).

- 5.13 The LGA Peer Challenge Report referred to the senior team often working long hours outside normal office hours, the importance of work-life balance and setting an example to colleagues, and reasonable expectations of members when contacting officers outside working hours. It is likely that additional evening Committee meetings, and other meetings, will add to workload and tiredness of staff, in addition to undertaking the day job. (Peer Challenge Report para 4.3).
- 5.14 Positive comments included collaboration between officers and councillors in developing the Local Plan ready for submission. (Peer Challenge Report para 4.7). I understand this has now been paused.

Summary of some of the key areas where improvements could be made as identified by the Peer Challenge:

- 5.15 Building a stronger combined member/officer approach, built on trust and an understanding and awareness of strengths that could be brought into this partnership, with agreed shared priorities and objectives.
- 5.16 Resetting the officer/ member working relationship, understanding the discrete, but complimentary, roles, the importance of members respecting officers’ roles and giving time and space to achieve the agreed objectives. An excessive number of complaints about councillors and staff was adversely diverting officer resources.
- 5.17 That councillors should draw upon the talent, knowledge and experience of senior officers to help achieve their corporate and community objectives. Delays in decision-making was costly, including servicing the cost of borrowing, and not realising the value of current assets.
- 5.18 Financial training for councillors to provide a better understanding of financial implications, project viability and creating robust business cases, may assist with decision-making. Further exploration of the work of committee systems may also improve some of these barriers and the democratic system.
- 5.19 Clarity and re-definition of the roles and responsibilities of councillors and officers, and how they inter-relate, to create trust and build a more effective working environment.
- 5.20 Learning from other councils with established committee system might help SBC move forward.
- 5.21 Develop a Corporate Plan with a longer term vision and strategy with agreed objectives that are outcome orientated and measurable to evidence they have been delivered.
- 5.22 There is now an opportunity to ‘re-set’ the tone and culture with a cohort of new members following the May 2023 elections, and to take account of a recent staff and councillor survey. This reflected a correlation between tensions between officers and members, and a lack of political leadership.
- 5.23 Since the May 2023 elections, there have been 22 new councillors. This is an opportunity to build new positive working relationships and time to re-set with an Action Plan following the Peer Challenge.

Appendix B

- 5.24 Following a meeting of the Council's political Group Leaders and senior managers in March 2023, an outline LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Outline Action Plan was developed to address the 12 recommendations contained within the feedback provided to the Council. This will be presented to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in due course to agree the outline plan and the subsequent development of a Detailed Action Plan.

Summary comments

- 5.25 *'Tensions, a toxic work environment, frustrations for councillors and officers, a lack of respectful working, lack of clarity about councillor and officer roles and responsibilities' are reported in both the LGA Peer Challenge and the staff and councillor surveys. Observations and recommendations have been provided to the Council. The over-arching theme is the opportunity now presented to re-set the councillor/officer working relationship, especially following the election with new councillors in place, to provide strategic and visionary leadership and decision-making, working in partnership with an empowered management team.*

6 Consider scope for creating shared services with other local authorities.

- 6.1 The range of services outlined in the Corporate Plan to meet aspirations around strong and healthy communities is significant and future focused. This particularly exemplifies the synergies that could be achieved in working in partnership with other local authorities and external agencies. This includes SBC Community Safety and Enforcement teams working with Surrey Police; Surrey County Council for road safety initiatives; providing leisure facilities to meet local needs through the Local Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy. Working with housing associations to provide affordable housing and tackle homelessness.

Family Support

- 6.2 The Council has been advised that Surrey CC will be going out to tender in June 2023 for Early Help services which includes Family Support. This, together with Parking Services (below) are examples of impacts on SBC service provision and staffing that are outside their control.

Parking/Environmental Maintenance (verge cutting)

- 6.3 On street parking and Environmental Maintenance have now returned to Surrey CC. Off street parking is currently retained in house but such changes to services will require further review of options for the service area and any wider implications.
- 6.4 As regards the possibility of partnership working with other councils or organisations, discussions are on-going to seek opportunities in service areas (for example Finance and revenues) where this could improve resilience, support retention and career development, as well as cost savings. Should such joint working ventures be realised, then this is likely to re-shape the staffing structure.

Appendix B

Officer/councillor collaboration 2022

- 6.5 I understand that there was a group of councillors and officers established in February 2022, (the Collaborative Working Group (CWG)) to look at opportunities for collaboration with other organisations. Terms of reference were developed and there were several meetings of the Group in 2022. This was paused later in that year.
- 6.6 The purpose was to consider and appraise any initial approaches or proposals for possible future collaboration or joint working with other councils or partners, including from the Surrey Delivery Board. The focus of reviewing potential options was to be:
- Deliver financial savings
 - Address resilience/capacity issues
 - Delivery better services for residents
- 6.7 Group Leaders have recently made the decision to reform the CWG.

Wider collaboration opportunities

- 6.8 Prior to this, in December 2020, wider work was undertaken across Surrey district and borough councils as part of Local Government Reorganisation and Collaboration, supported by KPMG. The purpose was to explore potential options for reorganisation within the county and assess future opportunities for collaboration within existing structures. The County had, at that time, expressed a preference for creating a single unitary council. The district and borough councils felt that greater collaboration between themselves would help alleviate financial pressures.
- 6.9 A range of options and ideas were presented to assist districts and boroughs to increase financial and organisational resilience through collaboration and joint working, including senior oversight from chief executives, councillors and council leaders. This would have required momentum to be maintained.
- 6.10 The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge of SBC 2022 noted the Council being seen by partners as commercially minded, entrepreneurial and community focused. This was evidenced by the high level of borrowing accumulated and the extensive portfolio created since 2016.
- 6.11 It was, however, noted that the delay in decision-making by councillors to achieve consensus to take forward plans was costly (£170,000 per month); the value of assets, or opportunities to generate income could not be realised, and sustainable service delivery was put at risk. Further actions were identified for officers to review the content of their reports, including presenting wider financial and economic implications, to assist councillors in their decision-making.
- 6.12 Unfortunately, *'the absence of a cohesive and functioning councillor cohort focusing on internal operational matters rather than displaying strategic vision; the poor behaviour of some councillors towards each other as well as to staff'*, is widely recognised and publicised. *'Some member behaviour is affecting the Council's reputation, costing money, affecting staff morale and could ultimately affect the delivery of council services for residents and businesses.'* (source: LGA Peer Challenge)

Appendix B

Summary comments:

- 6.13 *Currently, shared services are being undertaken, or discussions are underway to develop options. From my own experience of working with councillors and chief officers in seeking to create shared services, a key ingredient required for success is the trust and close working between officers and councillors, and between the officers and councillors across the potential partners.*
- 6.14 *From the information provided in the LGA Peer Challenge, and from the staff and councillor surveys, it is apparent that for meaningful progress to be made and to build on the current successes, there may be an opportunity to seek to rebuild working relationships between some councillors, and between some councillors and officers with SBC.*

7 Consider scope for making staff efficiency savings by automating services and progressing digital transformation.

- 7.1 The Spelthorne Digital Transformation Strategy (updated Feb 2023) expounds the benefits of technology and digital tools within a Council's transformation programme. Key objectives being to:
- Enhance service delivery
 - Reduce costs
 - Improve efficiency
 - Enhance collaboration
 - Upskill staff
 - Engage with citizens
 - Contribute to addressing climate change
- 7.2 Potential areas for making staff efficiency savings are likely to be:
- Streamlining processes and automating tasks to reduce administrative burden.
 - Staff focus on higher value tasks and over time reduction in staff.
 - Increased use of digital workflows and e-forms.
 - Reduced use of manual processes.
 - Automation and use of artificial intelligence (AI) for streamlining processes.
 - Improved decision-making through digital tools and access to real time data.
 - Enhanced opportunities for collaboration of services and platforms – greater interoperability and reduction of duplication.
 - Encouragement of hybrid working, where relevant, freeing up office space to use to provide opportunities for other projects or income generation initiatives.
- 7.3 The digital transformation strategy is targeting £600k of savings over four years and a continuous improvement programme seeks to continually improve efficiency and effectiveness across services and will be seeking a further £200k in savings from other activities.

Appendix B

Summary comments:

- 7.4 *Opportunities to transform public services using technology and digital tools and approaches in local government is well recognised in targeting and delivering services and for cost-efficiency. The LGA report outlined significant potential for the future and highlighted case studies of innovative practices where technological innovation has combined with customer insight, demand management, lean and systems thinking and collaborative procurement.*
- 7.5 *SBC is cited, with a case study, in this national research as one such Council being at the forefront (2012/14) of technological innovation in how customers were provided with access to services, news, transactional tasks and updates. From the information provided to me, innovation and forward thinking continues today. (2019 National Award for Efficiency and Effectiveness, IESE).*

8 Consider feedback from member and staff surveys regarding capacity issues.

- 8.1 The Employee and Councillor Survey feedback and responses were reported to the Policy and Resources Committee on 28 November 2022. The surveys were undertaken by the LGA in May-June and July-August 2022 respectively.

Employees:

- 8.2 High levels of satisfaction were reported in:
- Staff feeling a collective sense of purpose
 - Safe and flexible place to work with opportunities to learn
 - Trust in management
 - Engagement, competence and confidence in role
- 8.3 Dissatisfaction was reported in:
- Customer Services – feeling under-valued as a service but this is being addressed through service realignment and restructure since the survey
 - Political vision and leadership
 - A ‘disconnect’ with councillors / lack of vision and trust between councillors and officers

Councillors – views of their roles:

- 8.4 The vast majority (80%) of councillors who responded said that they became a councillor ‘to serve the community’, with the highest importance of the role being focused on residents and the community – representing, supporting or listening to their views.
- 8.5 There were opposing views regarding their perceived level of influence on decision-making within the Council with 28% believing they were very effective in role and 20% believing they were not effective.

Summary comments:

- 8.6 *The findings of the staff survey indicate a high level of trust in their senior managers in creating a safe environment to thrive and a sense of being ‘one council’.*

Appendix B

- 8.7 *Of concern were the criticisms raised by councillors while performing their role regarding their experience of 'personal attacks and aggressive behaviour across the chamber, disrespect, and hostility between the political parties'. Political vision and leadership is important for taking the Council forward.*
- 8.8 *The usefulness of member and staff surveys is derived from how the findings are used as a catalyst for change and improvement. Relevance comes from how this is communicated to stakeholders and the learning that takes place to achieve those improvements. If successes are not built upon, or challenges are not acknowledged or addressed, then future surveys will have no meaning and a useful tool 'to take the temperature' of an organisation will have been lost.*

9. Overall summary

- 9.1 *The areas I have reviewed reflect opportunities and challenges for SBC. Most of the comments provided here are evidence-based.*
- 9.2 *The Council is constantly reviewing, refining and innovating to meet the objectives of the Corporate Plan, achieve cost efficiencies and generate income to invest back into communities to improve lives of residents and businesses. Staff have a sense of collective purpose and have trust in their senior managers.*
- 9.3 *Pay, and opportunities for career progression, are impacting on the on-going viability of some services, reflected by recruitment and retention difficulties in particular professions or operatives. SBC is consistently in the lower quartile of pay across Surrey, exacerbated by its proximity to London.*
- 9.4 *A focus of this review appears to be seeking to reduce costs. However, it is well documented that any approach that focuses on cuts for the sake of cuts is short term and will ultimately cause an organisation to be no longer viable, will drive poorer public services, poor value for public money, destroys the reputation of organisations and their political masters.*
- 9.5 *Nationally, public services have already seen cuts, particularly at the local level, morale has been hit with several years of flat pay. SBC staff have indicated that other (non-monetary) aspects of a culture and work environment that values and motivates them to be high performing is important. Successful and insightful leaders and managers are aware that workforce morale and goodwill is essential for achieving productivity.*
- 9.6 *Unfortunately, goodwill, trust and motivation of some councillors and some staff, is ebbing for reasons that are documented in the LGA Peer Challenge. Relationships between staff and some councillors has been dysfunctional and damaging in terms of workforce wellbeing, productivity, reputation, and potential opportunities to achieve further synergies through broader collaborative working.*
- 9.7 *The comprehensive recommendations from the LGA Peer Challenge build upon the strengths evidenced through the efforts of senior management to promote a caring and empowering staff culture whilst taking forward commercially focused and entrepreneurial initiatives in spite of barriers they have faced from some councillors.*

Appendix B

- 9.8 *Greater efficiencies for the Council, and therefore their communities, might be achieved if councillors provided clear political direction to management in a cohesive way instead of focusing on day-to-day operational aspects that are the responsibility of management, as evidenced by the areas that I have been asked to review, and earlier external reviews already reported on.*
- 9.9 *There is now an opportunity for the Council to build on the recommendations provided by the Peer Challenge and 're-set' the roles, responsibilities and working relationships between councillors and senior managers, refine communications and generate a more joined up approach to delivering services to the communities of the borough building on the significant strengths and opportunities identified.*

Appendices:

- A** Spelthorne Borough Council - Reporting lines for senior managers – Tiers 1-3. March 2023
- B** Direct reports and spans of control – sample taken from Kent and Surrey district and borough councils' websites in 2023
- C** Benchmarking data – summary of findings Tiers 1 – 3
- D** Comparator salary data Tiers 1-3 - District and Borough councils in the southeast region - 2022/2023:
East Sussex
Hampshire
Kent
Surrey
West Sussex
- E** Summary of Cendex pay data – National, London, Southeast.
- F** Outline Action Plan from LGA Peer Challenge Report
- G** Sources of Information

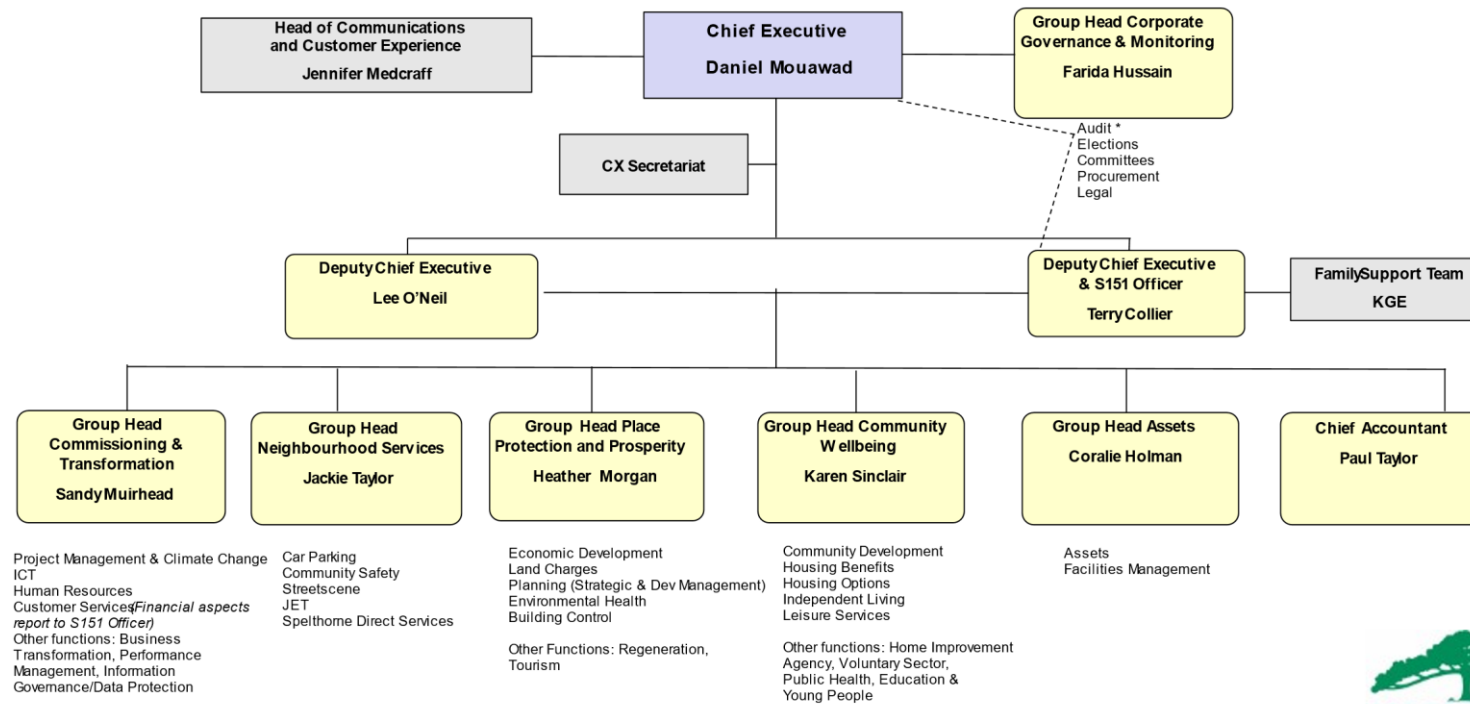
Jennifer McNeill
Regional Director
June 2023

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Reporting lines for Senior Managers – March 2023



* Internal audit has a dotted line to the Chief Executive and S151 Officer



Direct reports and spans of control taken from Councils' websites in 2023 – (undated)

Kent and Surrey district and borough councils

Authority	Tier 1		Tier 2 posts	
	No.	Area	No.	
Ashford	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy CEX Solicitor and MO Economic Devt Policy & Performance 	4	
Canterbury (Head Paid Service and Corp Director)	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy & Improvement People & Place Finance & Procurement Corp Governance Legal HR 	2 2	
Dartford (CO and Director Corporate Services)	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing & Public Protection Growth & Community Legal Services & MO Finance & S151 		
Dover	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Dir – Corporate Resources Strategic Dir – Operations & Commercial Governance & HR Leadership & Support Community & Digital 	6 5	
Folkestone & Hythe	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Services Place Housing & Operations 	4 3 2	

Appendix B

Gravesham	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director - Communities • Director - Corporate Services • Director - Environment + Dep CX • Director – Housing • Manager - Corporate Performance • Manager - Corporate Change • Manager - Communications • Manager – HR 	4 6 4 4	
Maidstone	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Kent Services • Finance, Resources, Business Improvement • Regeneration & Place • Insight & Governance • Policy & Comms 	6 5 6 4	
Swale	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration & Neighbourhoods • Resources • Mid Kent Services 	4 3 5	
Thanet	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dep CX & S151 • Director Corporate Governance and MO • Director Operational & Commercial Services 	3 2 3	
Tonbridge and Malling	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Services / Dep CX • Street Scene, Leisure, Technical Services • Finance & Transformation • Planning, Housing, Environment 	3 2 2 2	
Tunbridge Wells	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Change & Communities • Director Finance, Policy & Development (S151) 	4 4	

Appendix B

Spelthorne	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputy Chief Executive • Deputy Chief Executive • Head of Comms and Customer Experience • Group Head Corp Governance and Monitoring 		
Elmbridge	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Director / Deputy CEX (S151) • Strategic Director 	6 4	
Epsom & Ewell	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Corporate Services • Director Environment, Housing, Regeneration 	6 4	
Mole Valley	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Finance (S151) • Exec Head Service (People & Environment) • Exec Head Service (Prosperity) • Exec Head Service (Community) • Deputy CEX & Exec Head Service (Planning) 	2 4 4 4 4	
Reigate & Banstead	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors 	6	
Surrey Heath	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Heads 		
Tandridge	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputy CEX • Head Digital / Business Transformation and Business Support • Head Legal Democratic (MO) • Head Policy & Comms • Chief Finance Officer (S1510) 	7 2	
Woking	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Director Place • Strategic Director Communities • Strategic Director Corporate Resources • Director Finance (S151) 		

BENCHMARKING DATA**Benchmarking of salaries Tiers 1-3 across the south east region****Tier one – Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service post**

The top of the grade salary of the Chief Executive at SBC in 2022/23 was **£131,018**.

I understand there is a market supplement paid to the Chief Executive at SBC. This has not been included in the salary figures for calculation purposes. It is likely that other posts in the comparator councils may also be in receipt of allowances which are also not included. The salary figures provided in the Statements of Accounts for councils are used here for comparator purposes.

The mean average of (max) salaries in Surrey based on 11 comparator councils is **£137,789**. SBC falls below the average.

The mean average of (max) salaries of the 30 councils listed in the southeast region is **£133,048**. SBC sits below this.

Salary levels from the region, of the 30 councils where data was provided, 16 are higher than SBC (2022/23):

- ✚ Sevenoaks (£166,315)
- ✚ Waverley (£158,610)
- ✚ Elmbridge (£152,934)
- ✚ Lewes & Eastbourne (£150,000)
- ✚ Woking (£147,289)
- ✚ Basingstoke & Deane (£146,433)
- ✚ Fareham (£145,000)
- ✚ Swale (£144,999)
- ✚ Maidstone (£144,999)
- ✚ Folkestone & Hythe (£143,715)
- ✚ Reigate & Banstead (£139,065)
- ✚ Surrey Heath (£136,812)
- ✚ East Hants (£135,913)
- ✚ Test Valley (£133,865)
- ✚ Tonbridge & Malling (£132,150)
- ✚ Tandridge (£131,105)

I have looked at councils falling within a population range of 15,000 higher (**118,000**) or lower (**88,000**) than Spelthorne BC, and salaries.

The mean salary figure for **11** councils that fall within this category is **£132,962**. This places SBC just below the average compared to councils in similar sized population areas.

Whilst these calculations provide some useful comparator information against which to benchmark, account needs to be taken of other factors such as proximity to London, market factors, recruitment or retention difficulties, affordability.

Appendix B

Councillors may also think about the basis upon which their Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service post is remunerated. This includes such aspects as spans of strategic and managerial responsibility, established performance criteria and measurable targets, appraisals.

Based on this comparative salary data, councillors may consider it appropriate for SBC to be at, or just above, mid point compared to other comparable Surrey councils, taking into account relevant market factors and proximity to London.

Councillors have the responsibility of determining their chief officer salary levels taking account of issues of probity and fairness as well as the added value brought to their local authority area and communities by the services and innovation generated.

Tier two - Corporate Directors










Salary comparators (2022/23) are provided below, and the figure for SBC is **£104,812**. One Deputy Chief Executive post holds the Section 151 responsibility.

The mean average of (max) salaries in Surrey based on 9 comparator councils where data was provided, is **£108,928**. SBC falls below this.

The mean (max) salary level for the 25 Tier 2 comparator councils where data was provided is **£106,952**. SBC falls below the average.

I have looked at councils falling within a population range of 15,000 higher (**118,000**) or lower (**88,000**) than Spelthorne BC, and salaries. The mean salary figure for **10** councils where data was provided that fall within this category is **£107,394**. This places SBC in the lower quartile of councils in similar sized population areas.

Salary levels higher than SBC (2022/23):

	Basingstoke & Deane (£130,167)
	Woking (£126,412)
	Elmbridge (£126,091)
	Lewes & Eastbourne (£125,000)
	Reigate & Banstead (£122,922)
	Fareham (£115,000)
	Sevenoaks (£113,370)
	Test Valley (£111,998)
	Folkestone & Hythe (£110,772)
	Maidstone (£109,999)
	Surrey Heath (£107,460)
	Crawley (£106,730)
	Tonbridge & Malling (£105,714)

Appendix B

Tier Three – Group Heads

There are currently six established posts of Group Head on the SBC staff structure at tier three. Each Group Head has responsibility for managing a range of professional areas.








One Group Head (Corporate Governance & Monitoring) holds the statutory role of Monitoring Officer.

The top of the grade salary of Tier 3 at SBC in 2022/23 was **£83,372**.

The mean average of (max) salaries in Surrey based on the 9 comparator councils where data was provided, is **£84,934**. SBC falls below this average.

The mean average of (max) salaries of 25 total councils in the southeast region where data was provided, is **£81,439**. SBC sits just above this at **£83,372**.

Salary levels higher than SBC (**2022/23**) across the region:

-  Basingstoke & Deane (£102,548)
-  Lewes & Eastbourne (£95,000)
-  Maidstone (£89,999)
-  Reigate & Banstead (£89,181)
-  Woking (£88,609)
-  Test Valley (£86,048)
-  Mole Valley (£85,237)
-  Sevenoaks (£82,244)

Broader benchmarking for comparator purposes only 2021/22

2021/22 Tiers 1-3 salary levels – mean salary averages based on data from 40 councils

	Spelthorne BC	Surrey councils	Southeast councils
Tier 1 – Chief Executive	£129,999	£135,660	£134,502
Tier 2 – Corporate Directors	£99,999	£104,720	£103,615
Tier 3 – Group Heads	£79,999	£87,997	£81,481

It will be noted that SBC council salary levels are consistently in the lower quartile compared to other comparable local authorities.

Spelthorne Borough Council Establishment Review

Summary Report of Cendex Pay Data

Blank boxes indicate Cendex holds insufficient data (fewer than 4 data points) to report on.

Total Reward figures include all allowance and bonus amounts.

Tier 1 Chief Executive

Cendex Job Family	0	General Management	Overall control and direction of corporate objectives. Responsible for policy and co-ordination of business functions; involvement in the design and preparation of plans for the implementation of the organisations strategic objectives.
Cendex Job Level	10	Chief Executive	Ultimately responsible for the strategic direction of the organisation. Has oversight across the entire organisation. Applies the highest level of leadership and management skills. Controls and oversees all departments and business units. In publicly traded companies will report to a board of directors, in not for profits will report to a board of trustees. Technical specialists are unlikely to be found at this level.

General Management Level 10	National						London				South East			
	All Sectors		Public Services		Local		All Sectors		Public Services		All Sectors		Public Services	
	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward
All Size Organisations	154,731	157,269	143,177	143,177	179,652	179,995	158,521	159,900	149,992	144,944	151,790	151,790		
Employee Headcount 250 - 499	144,944	145,210	131,300	131,300			144,944	153,588	133,614	133,614				

Appendix B

Spelthorne Borough Council Establishment Review Summary Report of Cendex Pay Data

Tier 2

Deputy Chief Executive
Head of Communications and Customer Experience
Group Head Corporate Governance & Monitoring

Cendex Job Family	0	General Management	Overall control and direction of corporate objectives. Responsible for policy and co-ordination of business functions; involvement in the design and preparation of plans for the implementation of the organisations strategic objectives.
Cendex Job Level	11	Senior Director	Shapes and manages company vision. Leads strategy. Directs a major function or group of functions. Applies the highest level of leadership and management skills. Has seniority over other directors. Technical specialists are unlikely to be found at this level.

General Management Level 11	National						London				South East			
	All Sectors		Public Services		Local		All Sectors		Public Services		All Sectors		Public Services	
	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward
All Size Organisations	151,691	158,379	121,754	121,754	135,521	139,383	150,000	155,573	143,021	145,466	160,961	160,961		
Employee Headcount 250 - 499	153,000	156,500	77,630	77,630			160,000	160,000	88,012	88,012				

Appendix B

Spelthorne Borough Council Establishment Review Summary Report of Cendex Pay Data

Tier 3

Group Head Commissioning & Transformation/ Neighbourhood Services/ Place, Protection & Prosperity/ Community Wellbeing/
Assets
Chief Accountant

Cendex Job Family	2	Strategy & Planning	Involvement in the design and preparation of plans for the implementation of strategic objectives for the organisation.
Cendex Job Level	13	Senior Function Head	Involved in setting strategic direction for own areas of responsibility. Heads a major function or an area. Identifies and assesses complex problems for own areas of responsibility. Makes decisions critical

Strategy & Planning Level 13	National						London				South East			
	All Sectors		Public Services		Local Government		All Sectors		Public Services		All Sectors		Public Services	
	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward	Basic Pay	Total Reward
All Size Organisations	80,325	80,325	69,934	69,934	59,109	62,579	86,842	90,000	65,297	67,032	72,500	74,497		
Employee Headcount 250 - 499	76,750	77,000	72,497	72,497			85,416	86,904						

Sources of information:

2021/23 - Council's Corporate Plan

SBC organisational charts

March 2023 – SBC Establishment list

April 2023 – SBC Payscales

30.9.2015 – Towards a Sustainable Future – Senior Manager Restructure – Consultation document

November 2022 - LGA Corporate Peer Challenge –

February 2023 – Outline Action Plan

28.11.2022 Corporate Policy & Resources Committee Report - Employee and Councillor Survey results

2019 – 2023 - Staff leavers questionnaire summary of comments

2020 – 2023 Member complaints

20.4.2022 – Collaborative Working Review Group – revised terms of reference (Appendix A)

3.5.2023 – List of Market Supplements paid

9.12.2003 – Recruitment Allowance criteria

April 2023 - Amendment to Retention Allowance Scheme - Market Supplements

2015 - Retention Allowance

May 2023 - List of Casuals, Contractors and Agency staff

May 2023 – list of vacant posts

16.2.2023 – SBC Digital Transformation Strategy (Appendix 2)

A Devolution Deal for Surrey Annex 1

December 2020 – Surrey District and Borough Councils – Local Government Reorganisation and Collaboration