



Leicester
City Council

CABINET

10 SEPTEMBER 2001

MAINTAINING QUALITY SERVICES

Senior Recruitment And Retention

Report of the Chief Executive

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To ensure improved and adequate arrangements for maintaining quality services through the recruitment and retention of senior staff to ensure that the Council can continue to recruit candidates of the highest calibre.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Increased investment in local government and more emphasis on performance through Best Value, has led to senior officer changes in many authorities. In turn, this has caused increased national competition for high quality staff and upwards pressure on salary levels. A number of key senior vacancies have inevitably arisen in the Council, and these are being held, pending decisions, from the autumn onwards, on the Revitalising Neighbourhoods project.
- 2.2 In addition to the interim arrangements at Director level in Environment, Development and Commercial Services, there are temporary arrangements to cover four Assistant Director posts across the Council. This is putting pressure on other managers to maintain service continuity in the short term. Failure to appoint and retain staff of the highest calibre leads directly to a deterioration in the quality of services which users enjoy and naturally the competition for senior staff has become fiercely competitive.
- 2.3 Several Members from all parties involved in recent recruitment exercises have identified that it is becoming increasingly difficult to assemble credible shortlists. In a number of instances this has led to readvertisement of the post at an increased salary, incurring further costs and delaying recruitment. There is clear evidence that the Council's salary levels are not competitive as these posts would need to draw from a national field of candidates.
- 2.4 I acknowledge there are other posts elsewhere in the authority that may require similar attention and I will continue to monitor recruitment trends where pressures adversely affect recruitment and retention.

- 2.5 As a result of this and conversations with Members, I am gathering data to enable me to advise Members on any adjustments in remuneration needed to recover and maintain the Council's profile in the recruitment market by reference to average remuneration in comparable authorities. When I have this data, and the way forward on revitalising neighbourhoods is sufficiently clear, it will be necessary to move swiftly to resolve these issues and fill current Assistant Director vacancies and any others which arise. This will be done through the usual Member Staffing Appointments Committee. Such appointments with usual notice arrangements can taken many months before new staff start and operational pressures already building up will require action as soon as practicable.

3. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Any adjustments in remuneration will initially be met from vacancy savings, as there is no proposal to fill the vacant Director post.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the Chief Executive be authorised, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, to
- (a) determine an appropriate remuneration mechanism to maintain the Council's position in the recruitment market for senior staff; and
 - (b) proceed with the necessary Member Appointments Committees as soon as suitable recruitment material can be drawn up in the context of likely changes emerging from the Revitalising Neighbourhoods project.

CXO/RG
3 September 2001