

**NOTES** of the **STAFF AND MEMBER DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP** held in the Council Chamber on **21<sup>st</sup> July 2025 at 19.00hours.**

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**Present:** Stuart Condie (Chairman)  
Matthew Cornish  
David Eggleton (Vice Chairman)  
Tofojjul Hussain  
Andy Stowe\*  
Adam White

**Others present:** Cllrs:  
Diane Black  
Janice Henwood  
Brenda Williams  
Peter Williams

The Chief Executive and Head of Community Engagement

*\*denotes non attendance*

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**19. OPEN FORUM**

There were no public present

**20. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR**

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Eggleton was elected as Vice Chair

**21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Stowe	Business Commitment
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**22. SUBSTITUTES**

There were none

**23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none

**24. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

The Chief Executive advised that the cost of living offer for 2025/26 from the employers had been rejected by the unions. It was not looking like this was to be settled soon.

**25. NOTES OF THE MEETING 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025**

RESOLVED: To accept the notes of the meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> March as a correct record

**26. TRAINING**

The Chief Executive mentioned that the AGAR next year would have some new requirements of assurance and for that GDPR was going to be made available to all Councillors and staff as a refresher.

It was asked whether the Councillors could do the ACT counter terrorism training and this would be made available to all. It was noted that as Councillors routinely helped with the various events this would be useful to undertake.

The report was noted

**27. COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

The report was noted.

**28. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS**

The Chairman commented on the number of compliments and that there had been two complaints, neither of which had been upheld.

The report was noted

**29. STAFF MOVEMENTS & STRUCTURE**

The Chief Executive introduced the report and then left the room for recommendations one and two to be discussed as the decision could potentially affect her position.

The Council considered the *responsibility* of the RFO and determined that it could be moved to the responsibility of the Chief Executive. KAG also felt that a saving was not the paramount goal but getting the right person with the appropriate financial and other skill set for the role.

**RESOLVED :**

- 1) Move the RFO responsibility to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executives salary bar to be lifted to allow progression to the top of scale.
- 2) To start the recruitment of a new Head of Corporate Services/ Deputy Clerk at PO2/3 to replace the current Head of Corporate Service / RFO.

The Chief Executive returned for the remainder of the item

In response to a question, the current projects being undertaken by the Head of Projects were outlined which include two large projects of the Burial Ground

extension and the Festive Market along with residual bus stops and shelters and the virgin media boxes amongst others. It was explained that the rationale for removing the ongoing tasks of pubwatch and shopwatch will allow this staff member to concentrate on projects drawn from the Councils business plan and aspirations.

There was discussion as to community resilience/emergency planning and why this was a task that the Council should devote some time to. It was referenced that the Council used to co-ordinate emergency contacts but this has not been done for some time.

A suggestion to amend the recommendation was made that; the recruitment of the proposed new role in Community Engagement was needed before the start of the next financial year and starting recruitment in January would mean the staff member would be in place hitting the ground running for the spring events.

There was some concern that staff were under pressure and a real threat of burnout may occur. It was suggested that in addition to the recommendations a further resolution regarding the support for staff should be brought back to the KAG at a later time. It was echoed that staffing was the Councils best resource, the staff are committed and work hard, but it was noted that many feeling they needed to work additional hours to complete tasks was not as Councillors would want. Staff need to know they are valued as they are the creators of community value and should have the time to be creative, seek efficiencies and improved ways of working, including new ideas and enhancements within their working schedule.

**RESOLVED:**

- 3) Recommend to Finance KAG for allocation in the 2026/27 budget for the recruitment of a new post for the Community Engagement Team to increase capacity for existing and new events and to allow for the movement of duties to include Emergency Planning, Mayors Secretary, Community Safety (including pubwatch and shopwatch). This post should be advertised at a scale 5. Scale 5 Salary is currently £28,163-£30,559 (pay award pending) with oncosts (NI, pension, training etc) this would be an increase in the budget overall for this post of £35,000- 38,000. This recruitment starting no later than January 2026.
- 4) It was confirmed that the recruitment of the role for the Head of Corporate Services, due to expediency, needs to start immediately.
- 5) The Key Area Group noted with concern, that a lack of time to explore and invest in new innovations exists. These explorations which could result in greater efficiency and improved working arrangements. There was also concern that the current work levels may lead to staff burn out. A report is requested to come back to the KAG at a later time to consider these issues.

There being no other business the meeting was ended at 19.50