

Report to Shareholder Committee

Unity IT Restructure

Portfolio Holder:

Abdul Jabbar Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services

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Reason for Decision

Unity IT restructuring, of which this is the first phase.

Executive Summary

As the organisation evolves and to accommodate the digital skills necessary for a modern IT Support function, Unity IT will undergo a restructure which will increase the number of staff in certain teams in order to boost the skills and capability in these developing areas but reduce the effort required in some existing traditional roles and capabilities. This restructure was approved by the Unity Partnership Board of Directors on 10th March 2020.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Shareholder Committee approves this restructuring and approves Unity IT to progress.

Unity IT Restructure

1 Background

- 1.1 A review has been undertaken within Unity ICT and the key finding was that the organisation should evolve to accommodate the digital skills necessary for a modern IT Support function, with an emphasis on remote support and cloud-based computing. This would be achieved through a restructuring to focus on developing those skills, which will increase the number of staff in certain teams in order to boost the capability in these developing areas but reduce the effort required in some existing traditional roles and capabilities.

The expected overall impact will result in the operations staff headcount (excluding team leaders, apprentices, graduate trainees and management) for Unity ICT reducing by 4 posts with the current 45 posts reducing to 41 by the end of the financial year 2020/21.

This reduction will be achieved by the removal of 7 existing posts and the creation of 3 new posts. Wherever possible the reduction in posts will be achieved through voluntary redundancy, the Unions have been fully engaged throughout.

Following a voluntary redundancy exercise, it is recommended that 6 ICT staff should be allowed to leave the organisation. There is a further post that will need to be removed, however the intention is to do this via redeployment and retraining if possible.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 Budgetary provision was made for the financial year 2020/21 of £350K to facilitate IT restructuring, of which this is the first phase.

Allowing these 6 staff members to leave through voluntary redundancy would result in a cost of £270,197 and result in annual salary savings of £171,199.

It should be noted that the estimated cost of £270,197 was based on an assumption that the staff would leave the organisation on 31st March 2020. The actual leaving date is likely to be 28th May so the true cost will increase slightly on the figure quoted above.

3 Options/Alternatives

- 3.1 Do nothing
- 3.2 The Unity Shareholder Committee approve the Unity IT restructure.

4 Preferred Option

- 4.1 Option 3.2 is the preferred option, that the Unity Shareholder Committee approve the Unity IT restructure.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 Staff consultation began on 16 January 2020 in liaison with HR and working closely with the Trades Unions.
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6 **Financial Implications**

6.1 The cost to Unity and the Council will be met from the following sources:

- Unity ICT budget (2020-21) £157,827
- Oldham Council Pension strain budget £112,370

The initial costs to Unity can be accommodated in Unity's approved budget for 2020-21 and recovered by future salary savings within 2 years. The savings thereafter will be passed on to the Council. (Chris Kelsall)

7 **Legal Services Comments**

7.1 Any redundancies should be in accordance with Unity's policies and procedures having regard to HR advice to mitigate any risk of challenge. Currently the Articles of Association provide that any proposed programme of redundancies or rationalisation of a group of employees is a reserved matter and it is appropriate therefore that the Committee consider and determine the recommendations of the report. (Colin Britain)

8. **Co-operative Agenda**

8.1 The workforce will be better skilled to meet the technological demands of a modern IT environment through the use of collaborative technology which promotes a positive culture of inclusivity, engagement and ownership.

9 **Human Resources Comments**

9.1 The implementation of the restructure will be in full consultation with the employees involved and in line with Unity HR policies with the intention to reduce the number of redundancies wherever possible. ICT Management will be fully supported by Human Resources during this process. (Diane Thorpe)

10 **Risk Assessments**

10.1 None

11 **IT Implications**

11.1 None

12 **Property Implications**

12.1 None

13 **Procurement Implications**

13.1 None

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

14.1 None

15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

15.1 None

16 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

16.1 No

17 **Key Decision**

17.1 Yes

18 **Key Decision Reference**

18.1 Rule 13 of the Constitution has been sought and agreed by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

19 **Background Papers**

19.1 None

20 **Appendices**

20.1 None
