

# Executive Director of Resources Redditch BC and Bromsgrove DC



**Kevin Dicks – Chief Executive, Redditch BC and Bromsgrove DC**

A rare vacancy for a senior director working across two authorities with an exciting mix of challenges and opportunities is on offer in an attractive part of the country.

The Worcestershire councils of Redditch BC and Bromsgrove DC, which are run by a single management team, are looking for an Executive Director of Resources.

The two councils began sharing services 12 years ago with the appointment of a single Chief Executive, Kevin Dicks, and a single management team was created in 2010 although the political structures remain separate. Most services are now shared with harmonised terms and conditions, policies and procedures and a single workforce. Mr Dicks describes the structure as ‘one officer team serving two sovereign councils’.

He is now looking for a senior director who will oversee finance, customer services, legal, democratic and property services and who can bring a strategic perspective to the leadership of resources within the councils; who can offer elected members robust and clear advice that supports informed decision-making; and who can bring an inclusive management style that values staff engagement, and encourages collaboration and contributions from all.

Partnership working is a priority



and, apart from building and leading successful joint working arrangements and partnerships between the councils and their internal and external service providers, the director will also develop partnerships with other councils and agencies in order to ensure the councils deliver their strategic purposes. A strong background in partnership working is therefore important as is extensive experience of resource management and a successful track record in business planning, quality and performance and strategic policy formation.

Mr Dicks says he is looking for an energetic agent of change who can help drive systemic transformation across not only the councils but also with partners. They will also need to develop the commercialisation agenda.

Since the lockdown, agile working among staff has become much more prevalent but promoting cultural change is also a priority.

Although s151 duties could be part of the job the councils will

consider a non-accountant if they find a really strong transformational leader of change and would allocate the s151 responsibility elsewhere.

The councils are implementing a new enterprise resource planning system to modernise the financial, HR and customer interface which should be operational by the time the new director arrives.

The two authorities cover quite different areas. Redditch, with a background as a new town, has an 85,000 population with a younger age profile though health inequalities are a challenge in its pockets of deprivation.

There are ambitious regeneration plans and the council is bidding for funding from the New Towns Fund for its town centre.

Unusually the council still

maintains a housing stock of 6,000 homes within the housing revenue account.

There are however financial challenges for the council to address. It is still under a s24 notice from the auditors – partly down to its lack of balances, but a lot of work has been undertaken to ensure the General Fund is back on track and it is hoped that the s24 notice will be lifted this year. The HRA will take longer to fix especially due to problems arising from COVID such as rent arrears.

In contrast Bromsgrove has a 100,000 population but with a higher proportion of elderly people. Whereas Redditch is a more compact urban area, Bromsgrove is 89% green belt. However the council’s priority, as with Redditch, is also economic development and this is a key focus

within the review of the local plan. Before COVID the council aimed to attract more office-based investment but there is a need to fundamentally review its economic strategy as a result of the pandemic. The council has no housing stock and is financially secure. Both councils are Conservative-controlled and most of their services are delivered in-house, although Redditch recently created an arm’s length leisure company.

The two councils are well known for their innovation (being two of the first councils to share a chief executive and management team) and have been drivers for change across the wider system within Worcestershire, so if you are up for a challenge – and a massive opportunity, then your application will be welcomed. ■

