

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 21st February 2023

Report of: The Leader

Title: Appointment of new permanent Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the Report about?

Further to the Director, Corporate Services' Report to Council in December of 2022 regarding the exit of the current Chief Executive & Growth Director / Head of Paid Service, the appointment of an interim Deputy Chief Executive and the subsequent appointment of a new Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service, this Report sets out the process to recruit, select and appoint into that new permanent post.

2. Recommendations:

That Council notes - that, subject to successful selection and any handover - the planned Schedule of Activity and associated timelines detailed below:

- Executive Briefing 7th February
- Internal Advert 8th February (closing 28th Feb)
- Form balanced Selection Committee
- Selection Day 7th March
- Selection Committee Recommendation > Executive 8th March
- Chair of Selection Committee Recommendation > Council 10th March
- Ratification at Extraordinary Council meeting 13th March
- Offer, Acceptance & Appointment w/c 13th March
- Start 1st April

In the event a successful appointment is **not** made as a result of this process, the Selection Committee will make a proposal as to an alternative way forward.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 As set out in the December 2022 Report, the Leader of the Council committed to a wider restructure of the Strategic Management Board (SMB) through 2023, and this appointment is the second step in that restructure journey.
- 3.2 In order to provide stability and to oversee the handover from the exiting Chief Executive & Growth Director, Council planned to appoint an Interim Deputy Chief Executive pending recruitment into a permanent role.

3.3 However, things have moved on very quickly in the New Year so that all Directors now report into the Deputy Chief Executive. In addition, the Deputy Chief Executive has retained the sponsorship of the One Exeter Programme.

3.4 As such, it is illogical to delay the start of the recruitment of the new Chief Executive until after the current post-holder has left the Council i.e. after 31st March

3.5 Whilst it is noted that this is an ambitious Plan in terms of timeline, it is so designed in order that the organisation is not left uncertain as to what is happening for any longer than is absolutely necessary

4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources

None as all issues were dealt with in the 2022 Report

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

Not appropriate as the current postholder is a Consultee in this process

6. What are the legal aspects?

The process outlined herein is in compliance with the relevant Standing Orders [(50 (a1) and 51(1))], and therefore there are no issues arising.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

Not appropriate as the current postholder is a Consultee in this process.

8. The Background details:

8.1 Council is in the midst of a fundamental business transformation process designed to:

- Deliver a customer focused organisation fit for the future
- Modernise service delivery through channel shift and digitisation, driving out wasteful processes focused on customer needs
- Respond positively to an increasingly challenging financial climate

8.2 The Council's financial shortfall is significant. Whilst SMB, the Operational Management Board ("OMB") and members have been working hard to address a deficit of £2.3 million for 2023, this deficit has increased by an additional £2 million as a direct result of the energy crisis.

8.3 Working with the LGA, SMB recognise that the appointment of the permanent Chief Executive is imperative in order that the post holder is able to play a key role in the planned restructure of both SMB and OMB.

9. The legal background:

9.1 Standing Order 51(1) affords the Council the option of recruiting internally if it so wishes

9.2 Standing Order 50(a) requires that a Selection Sub-Committee is formed and this Plan defers to that requirement

10. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

This appointment will enable the organisation to focus on the new skills needed to take the council forward in financially challenging times and will contribute greatly to the Strategic Objective of delivering a "well run council".

11. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

Councillors can choose not to address this issue and not appoint a permanent Head of Paid Service at this juncture. This could potentially lead to the demoralisation of its Senior Management Teams (SMB and Operational Management Board (OMB)) - and the rest of the organisation of course - at such a critical time.

12. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

12.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding

12.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

12.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

12.4 In recommending this proposal no potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act.

13. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

There are no direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

14. Are there any other options?

- Do nothing
- Wait for the outcome of the LGA proposals in relation to the SMB restructure

15. This Report is for information only

The Leader of the Council

Author: Service Lead, HR

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background Papers used in compiling this report:

The Director, Corporate Services' Report to Council in December of 2022 regarding the exit of the current Chief Executive & Growth Director / Head of Paid Service, the appointment of an interim Deputy Chief Executive and the subsequent appointment of a new Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service refers.

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