

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Recruitment for Proposed New Executive Team Roles

4 June 2018

Report of the Interim HR Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To enable the Committee to agree the selection processes for the proposed new roles, should a decision be made to implement the proposed new executive team structure.

This Report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Personnel Committee

- (1) Consider and approve the proposed processes for selection for the proposed new Director roles**

The above is conditional on the outcome of consultations on the proposal for a restructure, and further decisions in terms of implementation.

1.0 Proposals for a new Executive Team Structure

- 1.1 Proposals for consultation on a new Executive Team Structure have been developed, and a report was considered at the Cabinet meeting held 24 April 2018.
- 1.2 Following call-in, agreement has been reached to move forward to formal consultation with staff and unions on the proposals.
- 1.3 Although it is not possible to prejudge the outcome of any consultation or decision making, it is prudent to consider at this stage how any selection decisions might be made.

2.0 Recruitment Processes for Appointing to the New Structure

- 2.1 Recruitment processes proposed for this exercise have been developed based on past practice for recruitment to Chief Officer roles, and take into account the clear need to be legally compliant, consistent and fair. Fairness in the selection process is always important but it must be particularly transparent when considering leadership roles. It is also important to note that the Rules of Procedure within the Constitution (Part 4 Section 6) will be followed in terms of the recruitment process.
- 2.2 Following consultation with staff and unions, if a new structure is agreed, it is suggested the recruitment process will start in mid to late July.

- 2.3 Adverts for the new roles will be developed, based on the job descriptions and person specifications. The roles will be advertised on the Council's website, Jobsgopublic (our partner for online job advertising) and a number of other high profile job boards, as well as in the Municipal Journal. A microsite will also be developed so that it can be referred to from each place the role is advertised, and this will contain additional information about the roles, the Council and the District. It is expected that this approach will provide for enough exposure for the roles to attract sufficient candidates.
- 2.4 Applications will be sought on the basis of a CV and personal statement / covering letter. The recruitment literature will specify what information the Council expects to see within an application for a role. Any existing Chief Officers who apply for the new roles will be expected to submit a quality application, even though they will be guaranteed progression through to the final stages of the selection process.
- 2.5 A view will be taken at the end of July as to whether sufficient applications are being submitted, considering both quantity and quality. If it is the case that insufficient quality applications are forthcoming, then it is proposed that an approach will be made to a recruitment agency to source additional quality applications. This element of recruitment can be costly, and it is expected a fee equating to up to 15% of salary would be chargeable should the Council take this route.
- 2.6 Once applications have been received, it is expected that the Chief Executive and HR Manager will carry out an initial basic paper shortlisting exercise to remove any applications which are poor quality.
- 2.7 It is proposed that Personnel Committee will then meet to carry out a more thorough shortlisting exercise with the remaining applications, with agreed criteria, to decide which candidates should go through to the next stage.
- 2.8 Once shortlisting has taken place, the remaining candidates will be asked to attend an initial, first stage interview with the Chief Executive, an external specialist or CEO from another Local Authority, and the HR Manager. This exercise will be carried out to ensure initial suitability for the role. A report will come back to Personnel Committee at this stage to confirm the outcomes of this exercise.
- 2.9 All remaining candidates will be invited to attend an assessment centre. This will be managed by specialist staff from the Cabinet Office, with some external assessors, and will be held in their Newcastle assessment centre facilities in early to mid-September. The key components of this assessment centre will be:
- A group exercise
 - An oral briefing exercise (with information provided to candidates beforehand)
 - A role-play situation
- 2.10 All exercises at the assessment centre will be designed to test the generic skills required for these new roles, but not the very role-specific skills relating to the specific field of work. The important outcome from the assessment centre is that for each candidate, we are able to see their competence in the following areas:
- Leadership
 - Communication
 - Performance Delivery
 - Strategic Thinking
 - Commercial Awareness
- 2.11 The assessors will construct a report for each candidate which summarises their strengths and development needs. A summary of this report will be presented to the

interviewers for each candidate they will see, and an approach will be developed to enable the panel to explore with the candidate any areas of potential weakness.

2.12 Interviews will take place, in Lancaster, during mid-September. It is proposed that interview panels are constructed as follows:

- Personnel Committee Members, which may include Cabinet members
- The Chief Executive
- An external CEO or specialist
- The HR Manager (for advice on process)

2.13 A set of interview questions will be developed for each different Director role, and agreed with interviewers in advance. Whilst these questions will be set as standard, interviewers will also have the opportunity to ask additional questions based on information which comes out of the interview, as well as testing further any potential areas of weakness identified at the Assessment Centre.

2.14 It is proposed that all interviewers will be given the opportunity to attend a training session for interviewing, to ensure they are aware of best practice, and also the requirements of employment law in the recruitment arena.

2.15 Decisions on who is selected for each role will be made by Personnel Committee. It should be noted that appointments to these roles do not have to be made if the panel believe that there is no suitable candidate.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):

There is no impact.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this Report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The overall financial implications in relation to the proposals for restructure will be referred to in the main report to Cabinet for consideration in early July.

It is envisaged that costs relating to recruitment would amount to approximately £20K. This includes adverts with the MJ (circa £6k), assessment centre costs (maximum costs for assessors up to £12k) and travel and subsistence costs for those delivering the service, contributing to the recruitment process and for internal applicants' travel to the assessment centre location (estimated at around £1k). In addition other external online adverts would be placed at a cost of £720.

Had the proposals for restructure not been made, it is anticipated that recruitment for the Chief Officer (Legal and Governance) and the Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning) would have been taken forward separately at different times, with costs for both adding up to the circa £20K figure mentioned above. This is because primarily individual adverts for each role would have been placed in the Municipal Journal, whereas one advert will be placed in this publication for this exercise, if the restructure goes ahead.

Costs incurred in the past for Chief Officer recruitment, e.g. the Chief Officer Legal and Governance role in 2017, included consultancy fees of £1,666 for North West Employers,

advertising in the MJ at a cost of £6,755, advertising in the Law Society Gazette at £995 and a personality questionnaire costing £920, which in total brought the cost of that exercise to circa £10,296.

It should be noted that detailed cost implications relating to the overall proposal for restructure will be included in the further report for Cabinet, following conclusion of the formal consultation process. It is the report for Cabinet which will seek approval for overall costs, relating to recruitment and other future costs incurred if implementation of the proposal for restructure goes ahead.

It is expected that up-front costs associated with implementation of the proposals for restructure will be met from the Restructuring Reserve.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces:

Human Resources will ensure that any processes in relation to recruitment are in line with any related internal employment policy and employment legislation.

DEPUTY SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Deputy Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

This report has been considered by the Monitoring Officer who has no further comments, save that this is subject to the outcome of the final consultation.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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