

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
STAFF AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the **Staff and Appointments Committee** held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth on Tuesday 20 December 2022 at 9.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillor G. Sanderson
(in the Chair)

MEMBERS

Dale, A.
Flux, B.
Hunter, E.I.

Purvis, M.
Renner Thompson, G.
Watson, J.G.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Binjal, S.

Interim Director of Governance and
Monitoring Officer

Farrell, S.
Hadfield, K.

Acting Head of HR/OD
Democratic and Electoral Services
Manager

O' Farrell, R.
Sample, C.
Willis, J.

Interim Chief Executive
Lawyer
Interim Executive Director for
Finance / Section 151 Officer

One member of the press was present

42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Dickinson and Simpson.

43. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 November 2022, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

44. REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF HR/OD

Proposed Appointment Process – Executive Directors

The report set out the proposed appointment process of a team of permanent Executive Directors to replace the interim arrangements currently in place.

Ch.'s Initials.....

Approval was given to implement a revised executive structure for the Council at Staff and Appointment Committee held on 20 September 2022 (included in the background information).

The report set out the structure of the permanent appointment processes and reminded the committee of the requirements under the Officer Appointment Procedure Rules in relation to the appointment of all Chief and Deputy Chief Officers (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix A).

The report was introduced by the Interim Chief Executive. He reported that there had been a significant number of applications for all roles. He referred specifically to the proposals for interim arrangements for the Executive Directors for Regeneration and Public Health.

Councillor Dale asked why the comparator authorities had been selected. The Interim Chief Executive advised that Penna had been asked to undertake a national comparison exercise across different types of authorities. The salaries which had been identified were competitive ones. The Leader added that, for exceptional candidates, members might take the view that a salary at the higher end of the range should be offered.

The Interim Chief Executive confirmed to members that the new Chief Executive would be involved in the selection process and the member panel would be cross party and would make its recommendations to the Staff and Appointments Committee.

Councillor Dale asked about on-costs. The Interim Chief Executive advised that these were roughly 30% on top of the salary and the S151 Officer had considered overall affordability.

The MO advised that members needed to agree a delegation to the Chair and Vice Chair to select the cross party interview panel. The Leader added that a deputy would be permitted from each Group to build in some flexibility.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the proposed Job Descriptions for 5 Executive Director roles: Executive Director - Children and Young People (DCS); Executive Director - Adults, Ageing and Wellbeing (DASS); Executive Director – Public Health, Inequalities and Stronger Communities (DPH); Executive Director – Place and Regeneration; Executive Director – Transformation and Resources (s151) be approved. All Job Descriptions appear at Appendix 1 of the report;
- (b) the continued engagement of Penna Executive Recruitment in line with the previous procurement process be approved;
- (c) the proposed outline timetable and methodology for the recruitment process for all the Executive Directors attached as Appendix 2 to the report be approved;
- (d) the remuneration for exceptional Executive Director candidates at the top of Band 18 (£162,285) be approved;

- (e) approval be given to extend the interim arrangements for those acting up into roles that meet the definition of Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer until such time as permanent appointments are made – schedule attached at Appendix 3;
- (f) as a result of Rick O’Farrell leaving the Council in February 2023, approval be given to the interim appointment of Janice Rose as interim Executive Director – Regeneration until such time as the permanent appointment to the role of Executive Director – Place and Regeneration is made;
- (g) in light of this, approval be given to the backfilling of Janice Rose’s interim post of Service Director – Regeneration by Sarah MacMillan until such time as a permanent appointment to the role of Executive Director – Place and Regeneration is made;
- (h) as a result of Liz Morgan’s retirement in January 2023, approval be given to the interim appointment of Gill O’Neill as Interim Executive Director - Public Health, until such time as the permanent appointment is made to the role;
- (i) All Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer roles whether permanent or interim be approved subject to no substantial and well-founded objections being notified by the Leader of the Council, in accordance with Part 4.3 of the Constitution (Officer Employment Procedure Rules);
- (j) the re-advertisement of the previously approved Director of Corporate Law and Governance (MO) be noted; and
- (k) authority be delegated to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee to select the cross party interview panel.

Sarah Farrell left the meeting at this point.

45. REPORT OF THE INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Proposed Appointment Process – Interim Management Arrangements and Permanent Recruitment of Director of Workforce and Organisational Development

The report set out the interim management arrangements that had been put in place following the departure of Leanne Furnell, Interim Service Director for HR/OD, on 31 October 2022 and reminded the Committee of the requirements to follow the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in relation to the appointment (or dismissal) of all Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers. Sarah Farrell had been asked to act up into the role, pending the approval of this Committee. If approved, it was proposed that the interim appointment remain in place until a full-time substantive appointment was made to the post of Director of Workforce and OD.

It was intended that the newly created role of Director of Workforce and OD be created to replace the role of Service Director for HR/OD. The report sought approval of the job description for the role of Director of Workforce and OD and remuneration for this role. The report also sought approval for proposed

selection methodology and an associated recruitment timeline (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix B).

The report was presented by the Interim Chief Executive. Members were asked to agree that the interim arrangements be approved with effect from 31 October 2022 when Ms Farrell had taken over the role.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the interim arrangements as set out in the report be approved;
- (b) Subject to no substantial and well-founded objection being notified by the Leader of the Council, in accordance with Part 4.3 of the Constitution (Officer Employment Procedure Rules), the interim appointment of Sarah Farrell as Interim Service Director for HR/OD (Band 16) with effect from 31 October 2022 until 31 July 2023, or until a permanent appointment is made to the role, be approved;
- (c) the job description (appendix 1) and remuneration for the permanent Director of Workforce and Organisational Development as Band 16 be approved; and
- (d) the proposed selection methodology and timescales as set out in the appendices 2 and 3 for the permanent recruitment to the role of Director of Workforce and Organisational Development be approved.

Sarah Farrell returned to the meeting.

46. REPORT OF THE INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Interim Management Arrangements – Service Director – Adults Assessment and Safeguarding

The report set out the interim management arrangements that had been put in place following a review of the pressure currently on the interim Director of Adult Social Services role having regard to the current structure and incumbents in post. This was in the context of the current restrictions on amending the structure permanently pending the outcome of the PENNA supported review of the top four tiers of management within the Council.

The report also reminded the Committee of the requirements to follow the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in relation to the appointment (or dismissal) of all Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix C).

The Interim Chief Executive confirmed that this was interim until the substantive arrangements were put in place.

Members were asked to agree that interim arrangements be approved with effect from 21 November 2022 when Ms O’Neil had taken over the role.

47. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee is invited to consider passing the following resolution:

- (a) That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act, and
- (b) That the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure for the following reasons-

Agenda Item	Paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A
9	1
	Information relating to any individual.

AND The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the interest in disclosure because disclosure would adversely affect the Authority’s interests.

48. REPORT OF THE INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Application for Voluntary Redundancy

The Interim Chief Executive updated members on the position, though a formal report was not considered. Further work was needed on the details of the redundancy and temporary arrangements would be put in place to ensure that to ensure that all functions were covered when the postholder did leave. These arrangements would be shared with the Cabinet Members and Group Leaders.

Councillor Dale asked how many applications for VR had been received during the recent exercise. Members were advised that about 100 had been received, with about 50% of those rejected. 10-15 of those remaining were Band 14 which were on hold and the rest were with Heads of Service to determine whether they could be released.

The Leader hoped to give an update on the new structure to members in January or February 2023.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....