



# Northumberland County Council

## Staff and Appointments Committee

30 January 2023

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### **SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT relating to agenda item 4**

### **PREFERRED CANDIDATES FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF SELECTION PROCESS FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS**

Report of the Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

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#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of this supplementary report is to seek approval from the Staff and Appointments Committee for the appointment of the preferred candidates for the following roles:

Executive Director – Place and Regeneration;  
Executive Director – Adults, Ageing and Wellbeing (DASS);  
Executive Director – Public Health, Inequalities and Stronger Communities (DPH);  
Executive Director – Children and Young People (DCS);  
Executive Director – Transformation and Resources (Section 151 officer)

Unfortunately, an appointment to the role of Director of Law and Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer (MO) was not made during this round of recruitment. Consideration will be given to how this post might be filled in the future and an update to the Staffing and Appointments Committee will be made in due course.

Attached to this supplementary report is a confidential (part 2) exempt Appendix 1, setting out the details of the preferred candidates for each role as indicated above.

This report also reminds the Committee of the requirements under the Officer Appointment Procedure Rules in relation to the appointment (or dismissal) of all Chief and Deputy Chief Officers. Accordingly, please note that all the appointments referred to in this report are

subject to no substantial and well-founded objections being notified to the Leader of the Council, in accordance with Part 4.3 of the Constitution (Officer Appointment Procedure Rules).

This report is supplementary to the previously provided report confirming the detail of the selection processes that took place during the week commencing 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 and confirming that the recruitment processes were planned and conducted in a fair and transparent way.

## 1. **Recommendations**

**To agree the following recommendations:**

### **Appointment of Executive Director – Transformation and Resources and s151 Officer**

- 1) To accept the findings of the selection panels that preferred candidates be appointed to the role of Executive Director – Transformation and Resources (Section 151 Officer). Details are set out in the attached confidential (exempt) Appendix 1.
- 2) To agree that in the event that any objection is received from the Leader and/or Cabinet that the appointment in question be referred back to this Committee for urgent consideration.
- 3) Subject to there being no objection from the Leader and/or Cabinet to the appointment, to recommend to full Council that the preferred candidate (details set out in the confidential Appendix 1 to this report) be appointed as the Executive Director of Transformation and Resources (Section 151 Officer).
- 4) To note that offers of employment will be subject to all necessary pre-employment checks.
- 5) To note that the effective date of commencement of employment is to be confirmed following all the necessary pre-employment checks.
- 6) To agree that the Executive Director of Transformation and Resources (Section 151 Officer) receives staff benefits in line with all Council employees and remuneration of £162,285 per annum (this cost excludes employer's national insurance and employer's pension contributions).

### **Appointment of Executive Director – Place and Regeneration; Executive Director – Adults, Ageing and Wellbeing (DASS); Executive Director – Public Health, Inequalities and Stronger Communities (DPH); Executive Director – Children and Young People (DCS)**

- 7) To accept the findings of the selection panels that preferred candidates be appointed to the following roles as follows:

- i) Executive Director – Place and Regeneration. The preferred candidate (details set out in the confidential Appendix 1 to this report).
  - ii) Executive Director – Adults, Ageing and Wellbeing (DASS). The preferred candidate (details set out in the confidential Appendix 1 to this report)
  - iii) Executive Director – Public Health, Inequalities and Stronger Communities (DPH). The preferred candidate (details set out in the confidential Appendix 1 to this report) and the
  - iv) Executive Director – Children and Young People (DCS). The preferred candidate (details set out in the confidential Appendix 1 to this report).
- 8) To agree that in the event that any objection is received from the Leader or Cabinet that the appointment in question be referred back to this Committee for urgent consideration.
- 9) To note that offers of employment will be subject to all necessary pre-employment checks.
- 10) To note that the effective date of commencement of employment to be confirmed following all the necessary pre-employment checks.
- 11) To agree that appointees receive staff benefits in line with all Council employees and remuneration as follows (the costs shown below exclude employer's national insurance and employer's pension contributions):
- i) Executive Director – Place and Regeneration – £150,820 per annum
  - ii) Executive Director – Adults, Ageing and Wellbeing (DASS) – £150,820 per annum
  - iii) Executive Director – Public Health, Inequalities and Stronger Communities (DPH) – £150,820 per annum
  - iv) Executive Director – Children and Young People (DCS) – £150,820 per annum

## **2. Process and Timeline**

During the assessment centre held during w/c 23 January 2023, all candidates completed the following;

- 1) A presentation with a question and answer session with a panel of Heads of Service, Service Directors, service-specific representatives, trade union and staff network representatives. The composition of the panel varied according to the role (see appendix 2 for panel membership)
- 2) A presentation with a question and answer session with a panel of external stakeholder partners. The composition of the panel varied according to the role. NB Stakeholder panels were not required for Executive Director of Transformation and Resources (Section 151 Officer) (see appendix 2 for panel membership)
- 3) 1:1 meetings with the Designate Head of Paid Service
- 4) A structured interview with a panel of Elected Members (see appendix 2 for panel membership).

The marking criteria and guidelines used by each presentation panel are attached to this report marked as appendix 3. The Leadership Framework for Executive interviewing, used by both the presentation panels and the Elected Member interview panel, is attached as appendix 4.

The Leadership Framework for Executive interviewing (appendix 4) outlines assessment against three principles;

- 1) 'Being'
- 2) 'Supporting'
- 3) 'Doing'

These principles were devised by the Council's Strategic Organisational Development Lead in partnership with an external Chartered Psychologist to bring together into a framework the principles of;

- The Council's Values,
- The Living Leader – the Council's Leadership Development Programme; and
- The Nolan principles – otherwise known as The Seven Principles of Public Life

Summary sessions were conducted at the conclusion of each day to discuss the outcomes of the assessment centre exercises and to evaluate candidates. These discussions included Elected Members that participated on the interview panel and were facilitated by the Council's recruitment partners, Penna PLC, the Interim Head of Paid Service, the Designate Head of Paid Service and the Interim Director of HR/OD.

The ranking of candidates is set out in the attached confidential (exempt) Appendix 5.

### **3. The Preferred Candidates**

Following the completion of the assessments laid out above, the interview panels identified preferred candidates for each role. Details are set out in the attached confidential (exempt) Appendix 1.

Conclusions were reached following comprehensive recruitment processes and assessment of each candidate's skills, knowledge and experience. The processes also considered candidate fit against the Council's values and the Nolan Principles. Preferred candidate CVs are attached as the confidential appendix 6.

Candidates have been informed that they are the preferred candidate for the respective role to which they applied, and all have indicated their acceptance of the conditional offer of appointment. All offers have been made subject to the recommendation of this Committee and the Officer Appointment Procedure Rules (as set out below). The appointment to the role of the Executive Director – Transformation and Resources (s151) will be subject to full Council approval.

### **4. Officer Appointment Procedure Rules**

The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (as amended) requires that, where a Council is operating a Cabinet and Leader model of governance, before any offer of appointment is made to a Chief or Deputy Chief Officer, the Proper Officer designated for that purpose, notifies the Leader and every member of the Cabinet of the intention to make the appointment, the name, salary and other relevant particulars of the post, and allows the Leader and Cabinet an opportunity to make any substantial or well-founded objections to that appointment, before the appointment is made. These provisions apply irrespective of whether the appointment is made by the full Council, a committee, or by an officer of the Council delegated to do so. The provisions are broadly set out in Part 4.3 of the Northumberland County Council Constitution.

The Proper Officer designated for this purpose is the Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service. Accordingly, the Council's current interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service will discharge the functions as required under the Officer Appointment Procedure Rules.

### **Implications**

<b>Policy</b>	Oversight of HR Policies and Procedure
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	Permanent appointments to these roles are deemed to be appropriate and the cost of the appointments will be met from within the Council's revenue budget.
<b>Legal</b>	<p>StAC has been appointed to discharge the Council's functions of the employer in relation to Chief and Deputy Chief Officers. Chief Officers is defined as the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and any officer as defined in S2 (1) (b) (c) and (d) as in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.</p> <p>StAC will also determine the terms and conditions relating the employees of the Council including the remuneration and terms of employment for the Head of Paid Service and Chief and Deputy Chief Officers.</p> <p>However, the appointment of the Head of Paid Service and the designation of statutory officers (the S151 and Monitoring Officer) is reserved to full Council.</p> <p>All other legal implications have been addressed within the body of this report.</p>
<b>Procurement</b>	Agreed via procurement process to commission Penna PLC to support the recruitment and assessment process.
<b>Human Resources</b>	The appointments have been made in line with appropriate employment recruitment processes.
<b>Property</b>	N/A
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A X	The recruitment for this process is in line with best practice in relation to promoting equality and diversity within the Council's recruitment processes.
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Consistent with Independent Corporate Governance Review (Caller Report)
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	N/A
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	N/A
<b>Carbon reduction</b>	N/A

<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	The recommendations will support the health and wellbeing of Council Employees at varying levels within the organisation
<b>Wards</b>	The recommendations are not related to any particular ward but cover the County of Northumberland.

**Report sign off.**

***Authors must ensure that officers and Members have agreed the content of the report:***

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer / Interim Director of Governance	Suki Binjal
Service Director Finance & Deputy S151 Officer	Alison Elsdon
Interim Chief Executive	Rick O'Farrell in conjunction with the Interim Service Director for HR/OD
Portfolio Holder(s)	N/A

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Confidential and exempt - Details of the preferred candidates as recommended by the selection panels

Appendix 2 – Assessment Centre Panels

Appendix 3 – Presentation Panel Scoring Template

Appendix 4 – NCC Leadership Framework for Executive Interviewing

Appendix 5 – Confidential and exempt - Candidate Scores

Appendix 6 – Confidential and exempt - Candidate CVs (Redacted)

**Background information**

N/A

**Linked reports**

- 15 December 2022 Staff and Appointments report prepared by the Interim Director of HR/OD – proposed recruitment process.
- 30 January 2023 Staff and Appointments report prepared by the Interim Director of HR/OD – detailed recruitment process.

**Authors and Contact Details**

*This report has been prepared by the interim Director of HR & OD*

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