

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 Thursday 9 March 2023 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT

Councillor G. Sanderson
(in the Chair)

MEMBERS

Flux, B.
Purvis, M.

Watson, J.G.
Wearmouth, R.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Binjal, S.(remote)

Interim Director of Governance and
Monitoring Officer

Crosland, S. (remote)
Hadfield, K.

HR Consultant
Democratic and Electoral Services
Manager

Kingham, A.

Executive Director for Children and
Young People

Sample, C.

Lawyer

One member of the press was present

Councillors Dale, Hunter and Simpson joined the meeting remotely. The Monitoring Officer reiterated the advice given to members that due to the adverse weather conditions, the Chair had agreed that Members could take part virtually and make comments etc. However, they would not be able to vote or be recorded as part of the decision-making process. Nor would their attendance be recorded under the 6-month rule.

64. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Dickinson.

65. MINUTES

Ch.'s Initials.....

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 February 2023, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

66. REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

PREFERRED CANDIDATE APPOINTMENT - Director of Workforce and Organisational Development

The report confirmed and set out to the Staff and Appointments Committee the outcome of the selection process for the Director of Workforce and Organisational Development and sought approval for the appointment of the preferred candidate. Attached to the report was a confidential (part 2) exempt Appendix 1, setting out the details of the preferred candidate. The arrangements for the permanent recruitment to this role were agreed at the 20 December 2022 meeting.

The report also reminded the Committee of the requirements under the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in relation to the appointment (or dismissal) of all Chief and Deputy Chief Officers. Accordingly, members were asked to note that all the appointments referred to in the report were 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 Employment Procedure Rules) (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix A).

Mr Crosland detailed the key points of the report for members.

Councillor Watson proposed the report's recommendations, which was seconded by Councillor Wearmouth.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the Committee accept the findings of the selection panels that the preferred candidate be appointed to the role of Director of Workforce and Organisational Development. Details were set out in the attached confidential appendix 1;
- (b) in the event that any objection is received from the Leader and/or Cabinet, the appointment in question be referred back to this Committee for urgent consideration;
- (c) the Committee note that offers of employment will be subject to all necessary pre-employment checks;
- (d) the Committee note that the effective date of commencement of employment is to be confirmed following all the necessary pre-employment checks; and
- (e) the Director of Workforce and Organisational Development receive staff benefits in line with all Council employees and remuneration of £96,416 per

annum within pay band 16 (this cost excludes employer's national insurance and employer's pension contributions).

67. REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

PREFERRED CANDIDATE APPOINTMENT - Director of Corporate Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer.

The report confirmed and set out to the Staff and Appointments Committee (StAC) the outcome of the selection process for the Director of Corporate Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer and sought approval for the appointment of the preferred candidate. The report had a confidential (part 2) exempt Appendix 1 attached, setting out the details of the preferred candidate.

The report also reminded the Committee of the requirements under the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in relation to the appointment (or dismissal) of all Chief and Deputy Chief Officers, and members were reminded that the appointment referred to in the report was 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 Employment Procedure Rules) (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix B).

Mr Crosland provided some background to members to the current position. The market for MOs was extremely competitive but a search by Penna had identified some good candidates in interim and fixed term positions. Two candidates had undertaken technical interviews and interviews with the Chief Executive and the Leadership, and discussions had been held with Group Leaders. As a result, one candidate had been offered the position subject to a number of conditions, including approval by this Committee and Council. The proposed appointment was for a fixed term of two years on a salary of £140,000 pa, starting on 5 June 2023.

Councillor Watson sought reassurance that all proper recruitment procedures had been followed which Mr Crosland confirmed. The process had been rigorous, but tailored to reflect the current market.

In response to a comment from Councillor Hunter, Mrs Kingham advised members that part of the candidate's remit would be to develop the existing in-house talent and expertise for this challenging role.

At this point it was **RESOLVED**

- (a) That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the remainder of the discussion on this item as it involved 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 and 2
Information relating to any individual and information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
- AND** The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the interest in disclosure because disclosure would adversely affect the Authority's interests.

Members then discussed the candidate's experience and suitability for the role in more detail.

It was then **RESOLVED** to readmit the press and public to the meeting.

Councillor Wearmouth moved the report's recommendations, which was seconded by Councillor Flux.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The Committee accept the recommendations of the Head of Paid Service that the preferred candidate be appointed to the role of Director of Corporate Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer;
- (b) in the event that any objection is received from the Leader and/or Cabinet, the appointment in question be referred back to this Committee for urgent consideration;
- (c) subject to there being no objection from the Leader and/or Cabinet to the appointment, the Committee recommend to full Council that the preferred candidate (details set out in the confidential appendix 1 to this report) be appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer for a fixed period of two years;
- (d) offers of employment will be subject to all necessary pre-employment checks;
- (e) the effective date of commencement of employment will be confirmed following all the necessary pre-employment checks, but it is anticipated to be early June 2023; and
- (f) the Director of Corporate Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer receive staff benefits in line with all Council employees and remuneration of £140,000 per annum, which is a spot salary at the top of pay band 17 and inclusive of the 2023/24 pay award (this cost excludes employer's national insurance and employer's pension contributions).

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

Ch.'s Initials.....

Staff and Appointments Committee, 9 March 2023