



# Northumberland County Council

## STAFF & APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

25 October 2023

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### Appointment of Deputy Chief Officer – Head of Communications and Engagement

Report of the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

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#### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to confirm and set out to the Staff and Appointments Committee the outcome of a selection process for the Head of Communications and Engagement and to seek approval for the appointment of the preferred candidate.
- 1.2 Attached to this report is a confidential (part 2) exempt appendix setting out the application of the preferred candidate.
- 1.3 The Committee will recall at its meeting on 25 April 2023, that the above vacancy resulted from the senior management review.
- 1.4 This report also reminds 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, please note that 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 Employment Procedure Rules).

#### 2. Recommendations

To agree the following recommendations:

- 2.1 To accept the findings of the selection panel that the preferred candidate be appointed to the role of Head of Communications and Engagement. Details are set out in the attached confidential appendix 1.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 To note that the offer of employment will be subject to all necessary pre-employment checks.
- 2.4 To note that the effective date of commencement of employment is to be confirmed following all the necessary pre-employment checks.
- 2.5 To agree that the Head of Communications and Engagement receives staff benefits in line with all Council employees and remuneration of £73,511 per annum within pay band 14 (this cost excludes employer's national insurance and employer's pension contributions)

### **3. Process and Timeline**

- 3.1 All vacancies at Head of Service level and above were shared with this committee on 25 April 2023 in the context of the senior management review report. The rate of recruitment to these roles has varied due to different processes being deployed dependent on the specific nature of the role.
- 3.2 This role was advertised externally on The Council's own platform, on 'Indeed', 'Linked In' and 'Northeast Jobs'. The advert closed on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023. A total of 55 applications were received and of these, 5 were shortlisted to take part in a selection process (one candidate withdrew prior to the selection process).
- 3.3 The selection process took place on 28 September 2023. The process consisted of a 10 minute presentation followed by interview questions. The interview selection panel consisted of the: Executive Director - Children, Young People and Education; Director of Corporate Strategy and Communications; and Director of Workforce and OD.
- 3.4 Following the conclusion of the selection process, Michelle Rose was identified as the preferred candidate.

### **4. The Preferred Candidate**

- 4.1 The conclusion above was reached following a thorough assessment of the candidates' skills, knowledge and experience. The process also considered the preferred candidate's fit against the Council's values and the Nolan Principles. The candidate's application form (confidential) is attached as appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.2 The candidate has been informed that they are the preferred candidate for the role and has indicated acceptance of the conditional offer of appointment. The

offer has been made subject to relevant pre-employment checks, the recommendation of this Committee and the Officer Employment Procedure Rules (as set out below).

## **5. Officer Employment Procedure Rules**

5.1 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.

5.2 Accordingly, for these purposes, the aforementioned role is deemed to be a deputy chief officer.

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

## **Implications**

<b>Policy</b>	Oversight of HR policies and procedures
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	Permanent appointment to this role is deemed to be appropriate and the cost of appointment will be met from within the Council's revenue budget.
<b>Legal</b>	<p>Under the Pay Policy Statement, the Council has delegated to StAC the function to appoint and approve any roles that attract a salary of £100k or more.</p> <p>Under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, where a Council operates a Leader and Cabinet model of governance, before any appointment is made to Chief or Deputy Chief Officer, the Proper Officer designated for that purpose notifies the Leader and every member of the Cabinet on the intention to make the appointment, the name, the salary and other relevant particulars of the post, allowing any well-founded objections, before an appointment is made.</p> <p>Chief Officer is defined in s43 of the Localism Act 2011 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The head of the authority's paid service</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The monitoring officer</li> <li>• Any statutory chief officer: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The person having responsibility for all statutory purposes (inc. s151 of the Local Government Act 1972), for the administration of the authority's financial affairs.</li> <li>2. The Director of Children's Services appointed under s18 of the Children Act 2004.</li> <li>3. The Director of Adult Social Services appointed under section 6 (A1) of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 (as amended by the Children Act 2004).</li> <li>4. The Director of Public Health appointed under s73A (1) of the National Health Service Act 2006.</li> <li>5. The Director of Education appointed under s532 of the Education Act.</li> <li>6. The Chief Fire Officer of a fire brigade maintained under the Fire Services Act 1947 and appointed under regulations made under section 18(1)(a) of that Act.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Any non-statutory officer: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A person for whom the head of the authority's paid service is directly responsible.</li> <li>2. A person who in relation to most of their duties is required to report direct or is directly accountable to the head of paid service and any person who similarly is required to report direct or is directly accountable to the authority or its committees.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p>A Deputy Chief Officer is a person who, as respects all or most of the duties of their post, is required to report directly to one or more of the Chief Officers.</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>
<b>Procurement</b>	N/A
<b>Human Resources</b>	All processes referenced in this report will be made in line with appropriate employment policies and relevant legal advice has been sought as required.
<b>Property</b>	N/A
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached)	This process will be conducted in line with best practice in relation to promoting equality and diversity within the Council's employment processes.

Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Consistent approved Management Restructure with Corporate Governance Review
<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 employees
<b>Wards</b>	Not related to any ward but cover the whole of Northumberland

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Confidential CV of preferred candidates

### **Background papers:**

N/A

### **Linked Reports**

StAC report and minutes – 25 April 2023

### **Report sign off.**

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

	<b>Full Name of Officer</b>
Director of Law and Corporate Governance (Monitoring Officer)	Stephen Gerrard
Executive Director of Transformation & Resources (s151)	Jan Willis
Chief Executive (HoPS)	Dr Helen Paterson

### **Authors and Contact Details**

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