



Northumberland County Council

Staff and Appointments Committee

5 December 2023

Probationary period completion - Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Director of Law and Corporate Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Report of the Director of Workforce and OD

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the committee on the status of probationary assessments for the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Director of Law and Corporate Governance of the Council.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To note that all probationary periods have been satisfactorily completed and, in accordance with the relevant policy (appendices 1, 2 and 3), employment has been confirmed.

3. Links to the Corporate Plan

3.1 This report is relevant to all areas of the Corporate Plan as it relates to ensuring that the Council has a robust mechanism for measuring the performance of the council's most senior officers and ensuring corporate objectives are met.

3.2 This report ensures that the Council is managed and governed in line with legislation and the structure of accountability is clearly stated and is set out in a transparent way.

4. Background

- 4.1 Specific policies relating to performance appraisal procedures (incorporating probation) for the Chief Executive and Executive Directors were approved by this committee on 20 February 2023 and 30 August 2023 respectively.
- 4.2 The policy pertaining to the Chief Executive appears at appendix 1 and for the Executive Directors at appendix 2.
- 4.3 Both policies make specific reference to probation and the following principles are common to both:
- 4.3.1 Probationary periods run for 6 months from the first day of employment
 - 4.3.2 An interim performance discussion takes place at 3 months
 - 4.3.3 An end of probation review takes place at 5 months
 - 4.3.4 During this time, all reasonable support and development will be sought, offered and accepted so that the probationary objectives will be achieved.
- 4.4 The Chief Executive's objectives and developmental needs, for the first five months of their employment, are drafted with the Chief Executive, Council Leader and Deputy Leader.
- 4.5 The Executive Director's objectives and developmental needs, for the first five months of their employment, are drafted with the Executive Director and the Chief Executive.
- 4.6 The Director of Law and Corporate Governance (Monitoring Officer) is subject to the council's probationary policy (appendix 3).
- 4.7 The Director of Law and Corporate Governance's probationary objectives and developmental needs, are drafted with the Director and the Chief Executive.

5. Probationary outcomes

- 5.1 During the first 6 months of 2023 the Council made offers of employment to external candidates for the following roles:
- Chief Executive (commenced 8 February 2023)
 - Executive Director of Place and Regeneration (commenced 1 April 2023)
 - Executive Director of Transformation and Resources (commenced 1 April 2023)
 - Executive Director of Public Health, Inequalities, and Stronger Communities (commenced 1 March 2023)
 - Director of Law and Corporate Governance (commenced 5 June 2023)
- 5.2 All probationary reviews have been undertaken fully in accordance with the principles outlined in the relevant policies.
- 5.3 All probationary periods have been satisfactorily concluded and employment has been confirmed. Individual written confirmation advising of this has been issued accordingly.

Implications

Policy	Oversight of HR Policies and Procedure
Finance and value for money	
Legal	The legal implications are as set out in the body of the report
Procurement	N/A
Human Resources	Implications have been considered and the proposed recommendations are consistent with best practice and employment law.
Property	N/A
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The recommendations are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation
Risk Assessment	Consistent with Independent Corporate Governance Review (Caller Report)
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Customer Consideration	N/A
Carbon reduction	N/A
Health and Wellbeing	The recommendations will support the personal development of the Chief Executive and Executive Directors and their wellbeing.
Wards	The recommendations are not related to any particular ward but cover the whole of Northumberland.

Report sign off.

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

Role	Full Name of Officer
Director of Law and Corporate Governance (Monitoring Officer)	Stephen Gerrard
Executive Director of Finance (S151 Officer)	Jan Willis
Chief Executive	Helen Paterson

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Performance Appraisal Procedure for the Chief Executive of Northumberland County Council

Appendix 2 – Performance Appraisal Procedure for the Executive Directors of Northumberland County Council

Background information

N/A

Linked reports

20 February 2023 - Staff and Appointments Committee report 'Chief Executive Performance Appraisal'

Authors and Contact Details

This report has been prepared by the Director of Workforce & OD

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