

**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, 5 December 2023 at 1.30 pm.

**PRESENT**

Councillor G. Sanderson  
(in the Chair)

**MEMBERS**

Dale, A.	Simpson, E
Dickinson, S.	Watson, J.
Hunter, I.	Wearmouth, R.

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Bennett, L.M.	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Farnell, C.	Head of HR
Farrell, S.	Director of Workforce and Organisational Development
Gerrard, S.	Director of Law and Corporate Governance (MO)
Paterson, H.	Chief Executive and Head of Paid Services
Sample, C.	Lawyer

**23. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors B. Flux and M. Purvis.

**24. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 October 2023, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**25. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

Members received a report seeking to confirm the outcome of the selection process for the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and seeking approval for the appointment of the preferred candidate.

**RESOLVED**

Ch.'s Initials.....

- (1) To accept the findings of the selection panel that the preferred candidate be appointed to the role of Deputy Chief Fire Officer. Details set out in confidential appendix 1.
- (2) To agree that, 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.
- (3) To note that offers of employment would be subject to all necessary pre-employment checks.
- (4) To note that the effective date of commencement of employment would be confirmed following all necessary pre-employment checks.
- (5) To agree that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer would align to the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services terms and conditions (Gold Book) with remuneration aligning to NCC pay grade of Band 17, £126,665 SCP 70. This cost excluded employer's national insurance and employer's pension contributions.

## **26. PROPOSED APPOINTMENT PROCESS OF ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER (ACFO)**

Members received a report setting out the proposed appointment process for the role of Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) within Northumberland Fire & Rescue Service. The current postholder had been successful in their application and, subject to StAC approval on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023, would be appointed to Deputy Chief Fire Officer, therefore, the ACFO post would become vacant from 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

This report also sought approval that, at the conclusion to the selection process, the preferred candidate would be notified of their conditional appointment, subject to the approval of Staff and Appointments Committee.

### **RESOLVED**

- (1) To agree that the Assistant Chief Fire Officer would align to the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services terms and conditions ('Gold Book') with remuneration aligning to NCC pay grade of Band 16, £103,133 SCP 65 (spot salary). This cost excluded employer's national insurance and employer's pension contributions.
- (2) To approve external advertisement of the post following consideration at the meeting of the Staffing and Appointments Committee for the period 15 December 2023 to 12 January 2024. Shortlisted candidates would be required to attend an Assessment Day at the end of January 2024 (date TBA). The assessment would include Psychometric testing, staff panel comprising NFRS key employees, and a formal interview by a panel comprising senior managers.

- (3) To accept the findings of the selection panels that the preferred candidate be offered the role of Assistant Chief Fire Officer subject to the final approval of Staff and Appointments Committee.
- (4) To agree that, 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.
- (5) To note that offers of employment would be subject to all necessary pre-employment checks.
- (6) To note that the effective date of commencement of employment would be confirmed following completion of all the necessary pre-employment checks.

## **27. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHIEF OFFICER – HEAD OF OD AND CULTURE**

Members received a report seeking to confirm, and setting out to the Staff and Appointments Committee, a course of action taken in response to the unexpected withdrawal of the preferred candidate for the Head of OD and Culture and the sourcing and approval of an alternative preferred candidate.

In response to a query, it was reported that, if the Committee did not agree or if the postholder was found to be unsatisfactory, then there was an initial three month fixed term period in place after which the employment could be brought to an end.

### **RESOLVED**

- (1) To accept the conclusion of the hiring manager that the preferred candidate has been appointed to the role of Head of OD and Culture. The candidate's CV outlining their skills and experience was set out in confidential 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) To note that the offer of employment had been subject to all necessary pre-employment checks and was for an initial fixed term period of three months.
- (4) To agree that this initial three month fixed term period could be extended for the full three year fixed term period upon satisfactory performance during the initial three months of employment. Thereafter, the standard probationary policy would apply.
- (5) To note that the effective date of commencement of employment was 13 November 2023.

- (6) To agree that the Head of OD and Culture received staff benefits in line with all Council employees and remuneration of £76,364 per annum within pay band 14 (this cost excludes employer's national insurance and employer's pension contributions). Band 14 presented below

<b>(7)</b>	<b>BAND 14</b>	<b>(8)</b>	<b>SCP</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>Value</b>
(10)		(11)	56	(12)	£76,364
(13)		(14)	57	(15)	£79,336
(16)		(17)	58	(18)	£82,315
(19)		(20)	59	(21)	£85,286

**28. REDEFINITION AND RENAMING OF ROLE CURRENTLY KNOW AS DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND COMMUNICATIONS AND CHANGE OF JOB TITLE TO 'ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE'**

Members received a report seeking approval that the role of the current Director of Strategy and Communications be redefined in terms of role content and that the job title be changed to 'Assistant Chief Executive'.

A concern was raised about the proposed new job title of Assistant Chief Executive. It was explained that the title 'Assistant to the Chief Executive' would imply that the postholder was the Chief Executive's PA, whereas the post of 'Assistant Chief Executive' included representing the Chief Executive at meetings. The Assistant Chief Executive was not the Deputy and did not have the powers associated with that role.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) To approve that the current postholder be assigned to the role of Assistant Chief Executive.
- (2) To agree that, subject to approval of recommendation 2.1 above, the change to job title take effect from 1 December 2023.
- (3) To note that all other terms and conditions of employment, including the evaluated band 16 and salary of £100,157 per annum, remain unchanged.

**29. PROBATIONARY PERIOD COMPLETION – CHIEF EXECUTIVE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS AND DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE (MONITORING OFFICER)**

The report updated the Members on the status of probationary assessments for the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Director of Law and Corporate Governance of the Council.

**RESOLVED** to note that all probationary periods had been satisfactorily completed and, in accordance with the relevant policy (appendices 1, 2 and 3),

employment had been confirmed.

**30. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on 24 January 2024, at 1.30 pm in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth.

**CHAIR**.....

**DATE**.....