

STAFF & APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

13 March 2024

Proposed Appointment Process of Director of Children, Young People and Families

Report of the Chief Executive

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed appointment process for the role of Director of Children, Young People and Families. The current postholder has indicated their intention to retire therefore, the post will become vacant from 1 September 2024.
- 1.2 This report aims to set out the proposed process to appoint a permanent replacement.
- 1.3 This report also seeks approval that at the conclusion to the selection process, the preferred candidate will be notified of their conditional appointment, subject to the approval of Staff and Appointments Committee and onward recommendation to full Council.
- 1.4 This report also reminds the Committee of the requirements under the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in relation to the appointment of all Chief and Deputy Chief Officers. Accordingly, please note that the appointment referred to in this report is subject to no substantial and well-founded objections being notified to the Leader of the Council, in accordance with Part 9 of the Constitution (Officer Employment Procedure Rules).

2. Recommendations

To agree the following recommendations:

- 2.1 that the Band 17 (£119,800 - £134,555) job description and associated job evaluation established via the senior management review of summer 2023 continues to apply. The job description is attached at appendix 1.
- 2.2 that external advertisement of the post for the period 18 March to 29 March takes place. Shortlisted candidates will be required to attend an Assessment Day during w/c 1 April. The assessment will include psychometric testing, staff panel

comprising key employees, panel of young people and a formal interview by a panel comprising senior managers and the relevant Cabinet Member.

2.3 accept the findings of the selection panel that the preferred candidate be offered the role of Director of Children, Young People and Families subject to the final approval of full Council.

2.4 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.

2.5 To note that offers of employment will be subject to all necessary pre-employment checks.

2.6 To note that the effective date of commencement of employment is to be confirmed following completion of all the necessary pre-employment checks and following approval by full Council.

3. Link to Corporate Plan

3.1 This report is relevant to all areas of the Corporate Plan as it relates to ensuring that the Council is compliant with the constitution and is fulfilling its legal duties and requirements to ensure that there is an effective and fit for purpose staffing establishment.

4. Key Issues and Background

4.1 Salary

4.1.1 The job description (Appendix 1) has been evaluated through the LGE evaluation scheme as part of the changes to the senior management structure implemented on 1 July 2023.

4.1.2 Band 17 consists of 4 spinal column points (SCP):

68 - £119,800

69 - £125,692

70 - £131,580

71 - £134,555

5. Outline Recruitment timeline and process/methodology

- 5.1 Psychometric Assessment will be undertaken to gain information on candidate personality and potential suitability against the role profile. Psychometric assessment will also allow the mapping of desirable values and behaviours against personality attributes and traits. The tool that is proposed to be used is called 'Lumina' and will be administered internally via our People and Culture service. This tool has been used to great effect in previous recruitment exercises across the senior management team.
- 5.2 An Assessment Centre will be delivered at County Hall. This will be designed to be delivered in-person, using a combination of in-house assessors and co-ordinators and will be supported by the People and Culture service. Elements to be included:
- A structured interview with a panel of staff
 - A 10-minute presentation to panel and a structured interview conducted by a panel comprising Executive Director, Children, Young People and Education, the relevant Cabinet Member for the service, another Executive Director and another senior manager at Service Director level or above.

6. Timeline

- 6.1 The process has been structured to keep to tight timelines, keeping candidate interest and momentum, while affording the opportunity to ensure all constitutional approval requirements are fully adhered to. The timeline also considers and supports a period of handover to the incoming new Director.

7. The next steps

- 7.1 Once a preferred candidate has been identified, a further report will be prepared for the Staff and Appointments Committee to convene at a later date and consider approval of the appointment.

8. Statutory Obligations and Pay Policy

- 8.1 There are certain statutory appointments which must be made. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 section 4 requires that the Council designate one of its officers as Head of the Paid Service (usually the Chief Executive) who is responsible for preparing reports on the way the local authority's staff is organised, on the authority's staffing needs and on the coordination of the way in which the authority's functions are discharged.
- 8.2 In addition, by section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council is required to produce a Pay Policy each financial year. Approval of the Pay Policy is a matter for full Council and cannot be delegated. The Council's 2024/2025 Pay Policy has been approved by the Staff and Appointments Committee and by full Council on 21 February 2024 and sets out details, amongst other things, of the payment to Chief Officers.

8.3 The Staff & Appointments Committee is therefore required to consider and approve the appointments of the roles of Chief and Deputy Chief Officers in line with the Council's agreed Pay Policy 2024/25. In addition, as the salary is over £100,000, the appointment must also be approved by a vote of full Council.

9. Officer Employment Procedure Rules

9.1 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 paragraph 6.4 of the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in Part 9 of the Northumberland County Council Constitution. These provisions also apply whether the appointment is permanent or interim.

Implications

Policy	Oversight of HR Policies and Procedure
Finance and value for money	Permanent appointment is deemed to be appropriate in relation to finance and value for money. The cost of the appointment can be met from existing budgets as it will be a direct replacement.
Legal	<p>The functions of the Staff and Appointments Committee are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To discharge the Council's functions of the employer in relation to the Chief and Deputy Chief Officers. To consider, approve, or make recommendations to the County Council, in relation to any changes to the overall structure of the Council's workforce, and the number and designation of Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer posts. To determine the terms and conditions relating to employees of the County Council to include the remuneration and terms and conditions of employment for the Head of Paid Service and Chief and Deputy Chief Officers. <p>The Director of Children, Young People and Families is a Deputy Chief Officer. Appointment to the role must be approved by the Staff and Appointments Committee. Because the salary is over £100,000, under section 40 of the Localism Act 2011, the appointment must also be approved by a vote of full Council.</p>
Procurement	N/A
Human Resources	The appointment will be made in line with appropriate employment recruitment processes. Relevant legal implications have been set out in the body of this report.
Property	N/A
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The recruitment process for this post will be in line with best practice in relation to promoting equality and diversity within the Council's recruitment processes.
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 health and wellbeing of Council Employees at varying levels within the organisation
Wards	The recommendations 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 Transformation & Resources (Section 151 Officer)	Jan Willis
Chief Executive	Helen Paterson

Authors and Contact Details

This report has been prepared by Sarah Farrell, Director of People and Culture

Contact details: sarah.farrell@northumberland.gov.uk