

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Full Council – 9 May 2024
SUBJECT:	Appointment to the post of Chief Executive Officer
LEAD OFFICER:	Jackie Follis, Group Head of Organisational Excellence
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Stanley as Leader of the Council
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION: The role of the Head of Paid Service and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is to provide the leadership to deliver the Council's vision and strategic direction, working with members and officers to create and implement the Council's Corporate Plan. The position of CEO and Head of Paid Service is a statutory position, and the post holder is also the Returning Officer for the Council.	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT: It is important that the process for recruiting a permanent CEO is recognised as fair and robust allowing the Council to appoint the best possible candidate, including decisions on the remuneration for this post. These processes are set out in the Constitution under the Terms of Reference for the Chief Executive's Recruitment and Selection Panel and for the Chief Executive's Remuneration Committee. The appointment of the CEO is a decision of Full Council based on a recommendation from the Recruitment and Selection Panel.	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY: The total full year cost of the proposals in this report is £209,000, which includes the basic salary, on-costs and recruitment costs.	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a report on the steps taken by the Chief Executive Recruitment and Selection Panel in identifying, evaluating, and selecting a candidate to fill the Head of Paid Service and Chief Executive position and to recommend the appointment of the Panel's preferred candidate to be confirmed by Full Council.
- 1.2 Due to the need to complete formal elements of the normal recruitment process and protect the details of the candidate until we can formally confirm the job offer to them, details of the recommended candidate are set out in [(Exempt) Appendix X (to follow)]. Due to the need to maintain the confidentiality of the preferred candidate ahead of Full Council's decision, any discussion of the candidate would need to take place in exempt business.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Full Council

- (i) confirms the appointment of the preferred candidate as recommended by the Chief Executive's Recruitment and Selection Panel and set out in [(Exempt) Appendix X]; and
- (ii) appoints the Chief Executive's Recruitment and Selection Panel's preferred candidate as the Council's Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer with effect from the start date of their employment with Arun District Council.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 The report informs members of the process followed by the Chief Executive's Recruitment and Selection Panel for the selection of a permanent Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and recommends that Full Council confirms the appointment of the Panel's preferred candidate and appoints them as the Council's Returning Officer and its Electoral Registration Officer.

4. DETAIL

4.1 James Hassett (Chief Executive) left the Council on 31 May 2023. On 31 May 2023 Full Council appointed Philippa Dart (Director of Environment and Committees) and Karl Roberts (Director of Growth) to the positions of Interim Joint Chief Executives (acting as joint Heads of Paid Service). (See link to meeting in background papers.)

4.2 At its meeting on 10 January 2024 Full Council agreed to proceed with external recruitment for a permanent Chief Executive Officer using a specialist recruitment agency. The annual salary was agreed at £140,000, this to be all-inclusive with no other allowances being paid. It was also agreed that the annual pay award for the CEO should continue to be aligned with the national pay award for Chief Executives. (See link to meeting in background papers.)

4.3 The executive recruitment agency Starfish supported the recruitment process which included identification of potential candidates via advert and personal contact. Longlist candidates then had individual technical interviews with a former Chief Executive Officer from elsewhere in the country. The final part of the process for three shortlisted candidates took place over two days and included a stakeholder panel meeting, a staff panel meeting, and a meeting with the Leader and Deputy Leader. Candidates were then formally interviewed on Tuesday 23 April 2024 and a meeting of the Chief Executive's Recruitment and Selection Panel followed to enable the Panel to agree its preferred candidate and put forward their recommendation to Full Council.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Full Council, and therefore all members, will decide upon the recommendation from the Recruitment and Selection Panel and this decision is set out above.

6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 6.1 By law the Council must designate one of its officers as its Head of Paid Service. At Arun District Council it is the Chief Executive post that is designated as such. At its meeting on 31 May 2023 Full Council agreed to appoint the Council's Directors as interim joint Heads of Paid Service until such time as a permanent Chief Executive Officer and Head of Paid Service were appointed. Therefore, Full Council must consider the recommendation set out in this report and no alternative options are available.

7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 7.1 The full year cost of the proposals in this report is £209,000 including salary, pension, national insurance, and recruitment costs. Full provision has been made for this in the revenue budget but as the postholder will not commence employment until later in the financial year, there will be a one-off underspend in 2024/25.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The CEO vacancy was identified as a significant risk factor in the Corporate Risk Register. Although appropriate arrangements have been in place to cover the post since the resignation of the previous CEO, the appointment to the permanent post is now required as agreed previously by Full Council in January

9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

- 9.1 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 Schedule 1 Part II paragraph 4(1) ('the Regulations') state that the function of the appointment of an authority's head of paid service must be exercised by the authority (that is, its Full Council) before an offer of appointment is made.
- 9.2 Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires a local authority to designate one of its officers as its Head of Paid Service, and at Arun District Council the Chief Executive Officer is designated as such.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 10.1 The Council needs to ensure that it has a Head of Paid Service, a requirement under section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

- 11.1 There are no such implications under this heading.

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

12.1 There are no such implications under this heading.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

13.1 The recruitment process was carried out in line with the fair and legal recruitment processes set out in Council's Constitution and employment policies.

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1 There are no such implications under this heading.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1 There are no such implications under this heading.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1 There are no such implications under this heading.

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1 There are no such implications under this heading.

CONTACT OFFICER:

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[Full Council Report and Minutes 31 May 2023](#)

[Full Council report and minutes 10 January 2024](#)