

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING – 21 NOVEMBER 2016
REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1** This report sets out the process for appointing a new Chief Executive for the Council and the Community Housing Trust.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1** That the Council agrees to establish an Appointments Committee to comprise The Leader, Deputy Leader, all Cabinet Members, Leader of the Opposition, and Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group to undertake the task of appointing the new Chief Executive.
- 2.2** To enable the Committee to undertake its task, the Council is asked to delegate full authority to the Appointments Committee to conduct the recruitment process and report the appointment back to the Council in accordance with appropriate legislation.
- 2.3** The Council agrees to co-opt onto this Appointments Committee, Mr Alan Goodrum, an independent consultant.

3 Explanation

- 3.1** Members will be aware that the Chief Executive has signalled his intention to retire from the Council in May 2017, following the County Council elections. It is therefore necessary to put in place arrangements to recruit a successor.
- 3.2** The protocol normally followed for appointing a Chief Executive is to establish a cross party Appointments Committee to undertake the whole interview and appointment process. The suggestion is that the Committee should comprise all Cabinet Members plus the Leaders of the Opposition Groups.
- 3.3** An independent element is always helpful when making such a major appointment, so it is suggested that the independent consultant, Mr Alan Goodrum, who was used for the recent appointment of the three Executive Directors and the Human Resources Manager be co-opted onto the Committee to fulfil that independent role. Mr Goodrum is an ex-Chief Executive of two local authorities and has extensive knowledge and experience of the role and of local government generally. His assistance in the recent appointments proved to be invaluable.

3.4 The current Chief Executive will take the role of advisor to the Appointments Committee but will not take part in the actual appointment decision.

3.5 The Council's Constitution outlines the following process for the appointment of the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive):

1. The full Council will approve the appointment of the Head of Paid Service following the recommendation of such an appointment by a Committee of the Council. That Committee must include at least one Member of the Cabinet.

2. Before an offer of appointment as the Head of Paid Service is made every Cabinet Member must be notified of:-

(a) the name of the person to whom the Council wishes to make the offer;

(b) any other particulars relevant to the appointment; and

(c) the period within which any objection to the making of the offer is to be made by the Leader on behalf of the Cabinet.

3. An offer of appointment can be made if:-

(a) the Leader has within the period referred to in 3.2 (c) above stated that there is no Cabinet objection to the appointment; or

(b) no objection from the Leader has been received within the period referred to in 3.2 (c); or

(c) the appointing body is satisfied that any objections received from the Leader within the period referred to in 3.2 (c) are not material or are not well founded.

3.6 Once the Appointments Panel has made the decision and chosen the successful candidate, this will be reported to the next available meeting of the Council for approval.

3.7 A timetable has been drafted and the key dates are outlined in paragraph 12.

Implications

4 Legal Implication(s)

4.1 The Council is required by law to approve the appointment of the Head of Paid Service following the recommendation of such an appointment by the Appointments Committee.

5 Financial Implication(s)

All costs arising from the appointments process will be included within the Chief Executive's restructuring of the senior management of the Council.

6 Risk Management Implications

The only risk is that the Council is not able to find a suitable candidate to fill this statutory role, in which case interim arrangements would need to be implemented.

7 Security and Terrorism Implication(s)

- 7.1 There are no security and terrorism implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report.

8 Procurement Implication(s)

- 8.1 There are no procurement implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report.

9 Climate Change Implication(s)

- 9.1 There are no climate change implications inherent in relation to the proposals in this report.

10 Link to Corporate Priorities

- 10.1 The subject of this report is linked to statutory requirements under the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and provisions in respect of the appointment of Officers in the Council's Constitution.

11 Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been carried out in connection with the proposals that are set out in this report. It is considered that there are no differential impacts.

12. Timetable

Date	Task
End October/Early November 2016	Prepare job/person specification; set up interview panel; prepare advertisement; prepare background information for candidates; decide on assessment tasks and various tests; prepare interview questions; all other pre-advertising tasks.
21 November 2016	Council meeting to establish the Appointments Committee
Weeks commencing 21 & 28 November 2016	Advertise post in journals and online. Training for Appointments Committee on recruitment and selection
9 December 2016	Closing date for applications
Week commencing 12 December 2016	Longlisting
16 December 2016	Invite longlisted candidates to undertake assessments
Weeks commencing 19 and 26 December 2016	Christmas Period
Weeks commencing 3 and 9 January 2017	Exercises/Tasks undertaken by longlisted candidates.
10 January 2017	Agree shortlist
11 January 2017	Informal meeting of shortlisted candidates with Appointments Committee
Week commencing 16 January 2017	Interviews
20 January 2017	Make appointment
6 February 2017	Council meeting confirms appointment of new Chief Executive
End April/Early May 2017	New Chief Executive starts

Name of author
Title
Date

Michel Saminaden
Chief Executive
November 2016