

# NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SHADOW AUTHORITY

## SHADOW AUTHORITY MEETING

20<sup>th</sup> August 2020

### Report of the Chair of the Shadow Senior Appointments Committee

Report Title	Permanent Appointment of the Chief Executive for North Northamptonshire Council
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#### 1. Purpose

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- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend to the Shadow Authority the appointment of the new permanent Chief Executive for the North Northamptonshire Council.

#### 2. Recommendations

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- 2.1 That Rob Bridge be confirmed as Chief Executive designate for the North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority (start date to be agreed following approval) and that he be confirmed as the new permanent Chief Executive, Head of Paid Service and Returning Officer for the North Northamptonshire Council from 1 April 2021.
- 2.2 That approval be given to a salary of £170,000 (within the advertised salary grade £170,000 - £180,000).

*(Reason for Recommendations – The appointment of Chief Executive is for decision by the Shadow Authority. In line with government guidance and the importance of transparency and of objective justification for senior salaries the basis for the recommended salary is set out in this paper.)*

#### 3. Report Background

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##### 3.1 Recruitment and Selection

- 3.1.1 The Northamptonshire (Structural Changes) Order 2020 requires the Shadow Authority for North Northamptonshire to appoint a permanent Chief Executive by 31 December 2020; prior to the formation of the new authority on 1 April 2021.
- 3.1.2 A national recruitment campaign was launched in late May 2020 for the permanent Chief Executive role, together with a number of other statutory roles; including Director of Finance (Section 151), Director of Adult Social Services (DASS), Director of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) and a shared Director Children's Services (DCS) to sit across both unitary authorities.

- 3.1.3 In July 2020, the Senior Appointments Task and Finish Group and Shadow Senior Appointments Committee developed the Chief Executive role profile and person specification for this recruitment. They also shaped an inclusive and holistic selection and interview process; agreeing partner, member and employee stakeholder panels and also the members of the sub-committee forming the main appointment panel.
- 3.1.4 Penna are engaged as our Executive Search Partner and have supported the appointment panel in the search for candidates; in addition to the longlisting and shortlisting process; which involved a professional technical adviser/assessor.
- 3.1.5 The main appointment panel received a total of 19 applications from this campaign at the end of June and the longlisted 10 candidates on 13 July 2020.

A shortlist of 5 candidates was then agreed by the main appointment panel, following the technical assessment stage. Assessment and interviews took place over a two-day period; with day one (5 August) involving the main member appointment panel and also member, partner and employee stakeholder panels. 3 candidates were then selected by the main appointment panel to take part in the final interview by the main appointment panel on 6 August.

- 3.1.6 The appointment panel received a briefing and training on recruitment and selection prior to the interviews, as agreed by the North Northamptonshire Joint Committee in January 2020.
- 3.1.7 The final Interview for the Chief Executive was undertaken on Thursday 6 August 2020. The main appointment panel (senior appointment sub committee) comprised:

Councillor Russell Roberts – Leader of the North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority and Leader of Kettering Borough Council.

Councillor Martin Griffiths - Deputy Leader of the North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority and Leader of the Borough Council of Wellingborough.

Councillor Steven North - Leader of East Northamptonshire Council.

Councillor Tom Beattie – Leader of Corby Borough Council

Councillor Jason Smithers – Designated Member Representative for Northamptonshire County Council.

- 3.1.8 The conclusion of the main appointment panel is to recommend the appointment of Rob Bridge as North Northamptonshire's permanent Chief Executive and designated Head of Paid Service. Rob is currently Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) at Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and prior to that, he undertook the role of Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer at Fenland District Council. He has significant experience in leading the transformation and place shaping agenda.
- 3.1.9 Should the Shadow Authority agree this recommendation, a start date will be confirmed with the candidate; taking into account their notice obligations. The role was advertised at a salary between £170 - £180k, based on benchmarking of similar sized unitary councils. The salary offer will be made at the bottom of the salary range.

## **3.2 Issues and Choices**

- 3.2.1 The assessment process carried out on 5 August was part of a preferred approach by both the Senior Appointment Task and Finish Group and Shadow Senior Appointments Committee to engage wider stakeholders to ensure an inclusive and informed recruitment process.

- 3.2.2 The stakeholder panels assessed each candidate in a structured interview process against the requirements detailed in the person specification.
- 3.2.3 In accordance with part F of the Shadow Authority's Constitution, the Staff Employment Procedure Rules this recommendation was sent in confidence to each member of the Shadow Executive Committee in order to establish if any member of the Shadow Executive Committee has any objection to the proposed appointment. No objections from the Leader, on behalf of the Shadow Executive Committee have been raised to this recommendation.

#### **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

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##### **4.1 Policy**

- 4.1.1 The appointment of a Statutory Head of Paid Service by 31 December 2020 is a requirement that is laid down in the Northamptonshire (Structural Changes) Order 2020.

##### **4.2 Resources and Risk**

- 4.2.1 The appointment of Statutory Officers will enable a safe and legal transition from the shadow authority to the Unitary Council in 2021.

##### **4.3 Legal**

- 4.3.1 The appointments to the statutory officer designations ensures compliance with the Structural Change Order.

##### **4.4 Equality and Health**

- 4.4.1 The appointment process followed a fair and transparent process. Eligible candidates were invited to apply to a national and open recruitment campaign.

#### **Report Author:**

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(On behalf of the Shadow Senior Appointments Committee)**