



Employment Committee Thursday, 17th August 2023

Report Title	Selection and Appointment for Head of Paid Service/ Chief Executive
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Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	Not applicable

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Job Description – Head of Paid Service/Chief Executive

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Employment Committee to establish a Sub-Committee to undertake the recruitment and selection process for the role of Head of Paid Service/Chief Executive.
- 1.2 Establishing a Sub-Committee will ensure that the recruitment and selection approach for this role is comprehensive and inclusive as well as enabling those who have a real stake and interest in this appointment to be part of the process. It is proposed that partners, stakeholders and members will play a role in helping to select the best candidate for this role.
- 1.3 The sub-committee for the Head of Paid Service/Chief Executive will be responsible for selecting and recommending the successful candidate for approval by Full Council.

2 Executive Summary

- 2.1 The previous Chief Executive left the Council on 4th June 2023 following which the Executive Director of Place and Economy was appointed on an interim basis until the permanent role has been recruited to.
- 2.2 This senior, statutory role is vital to leading and shaping the future direction of North Northamptonshire and it is therefore important that the best candidate is sourced and appointed. In order to achieve this, a national recruitment campaign will start in September 2023, followed by an inclusive selection and appointment process.
- 2.3 This report recommends the appointment of a Sub-Committee to undertake the recruitment and selection of this senior, statutory role for North Northamptonshire Council in order to ensure that a thorough and complete recruitment process is undertaken to obtain the best candidate to lead North Northamptonshire Council.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Employment Committee:
 - a) Establishes a politically balanced Sub Committee consisting of six elected members to interview and recommend appointment of the Chief Executive to Council.
 - b) Agrees that membership of the Sub Committee shall consist of 4 Conservative members, 1 Labour member and 1 Green Alliance member.
 - c) Delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Human Resources, in consultation with members of the established Sub Committee to longlist and shortlist suitably qualified applicants.
 - d) Delegates authority to the established Sub Committee to:
 - Make a conditional offer (and determine particulars such as remuneration) to the most suitable candidate (subject to the full Council's approval);
 - Recommend that the full Council approve the appointment of the most suitable candidate as the Chief Executive of North Northamptonshire.
 - e) Agree that the following stakeholder panels will be established to provide feedback to the Sub Committee:
 - Member Stakeholder Panel;
 - Leadership Panel;

- Partner Stakeholder Panel comprising partners from Health, Police, Education, community faith groups and the voluntary and business sectors;
 - Employee Stakeholder Group comprising of employees selected from each Directorate and including trade unions;
 - Children and Young People Panel.
- f) Note that the assessment process will include psychometric tests; a technical interview and leadership scenario to inform the Sub Committee.

Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.2 These recommendations have been made in ensure to ensure that a comprehensive, inclusive and thorough recruitment and selection process is undertaken, in accordance with the constitution, to ensure that the right candidate is selected as Head of Paid Service/Chief Executive.

Alternative Options Considered

- 3.3 The role of Head of Paid Service/Chief Executive is critical for the Council and is a statutory appointment which is required to be filled.
- 3.4 Instead of establishing a Sub Committee, the Employment Committee could undertake the appointment process. This is not the recommended action as Sub Committees will provide smaller and more focussed expertise and will be able to interview in depth, ensuring the right candidate for North Northamptonshire.

4 Report Background

- 4.1 On 30th March 2023, full Council agreed to undertake a recruitment process for the role of Chief Executive for North Northamptonshire.
- 4.2 A national recruitment campaign will be launched in September 2023 to ensure that the Council attracts the best talent in the market. The Council has achieved a great deal since it was vested on 1st April 2021 and to achieve its ambition for the future, the Council is looking for an exceptional candidate to lead and shape the future for North Northamptonshire.
- 4.3 In accordance with section 6.1 of 'Part 4.7 - Employment Committee' of the Constitution, the Employment Committee has the power to establish a Sub Committee to act as an appointment panel for the appointment of senior officers (referred to in this report as the interview panel).
- 4.4 As is the case with the Committee itself, the Sub Committee will be a formal meeting and will be subject to the requirements relating to political balance of the Council.
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- 4.5 In accordance with Section 3.1 of Part 9.5 – ‘Officer Employment Procedure Rules’ of the Constitution, the Sub Committee must also include at least one member of the Executive.

5 Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The appointment of a Chief Executive is essential to the Council driving forward its ambitions, delivering the Corporate Plan and ensuring excellent services to North Northamptonshire. It is important therefore that the Council has a robust process for appointing to senior roles.
- 5.2 As stated above, the Council has commissioned a significant national recruitment campaign to ensure that it attracts and recruits excellent candidates. Following a procurement process, Penna has been selected to support the Council with the campaign and recruitment process.
- 5.3 Whilst the Employment Committee could undertake the interviewing and recommendation of a candidate to Council, it is recommended that a Sub-Committee is established to undertake this role.
- 5.4 It is proposed that the Sub Committee consists of six elected members which shall be representative of the political balance of the Council. In accordance with current political balance calculations, the membership would therefore be:
- i) Conservative x 4 members;
 - ii) Labour x 1 member;
 - iii) Green Alliance x 1 member.
- 5.5 The Employment Committee’s Terms of Reference allow members who are not standing members of it to be co-opted onto its Sub Committees with the approval of the Chair of the Committee. It is a requirement that at least one Executive member is on the interview panel for senior roles.
- 5.6 If a Sub Committee is established, the Leaders of the political groups shall be asked for nominations to them. The Leader of the majority group shall confirm which Executive member/s shall be co-opted onto it. The Chair of the Employment Committee will be asked to approve the nominations of those members who are not members of the Committee, should they be submitted.
- 5.7 The appointment will have a key inward and outward facing role and it is essential therefore that stakeholder panels are established to provide feedback to the Sub Committee. This also provides candidates with the opportunity to understand the context of the role and demonstrate their experience with a range of people and in a range of environments.
- 5.8 Applicants will also be subject to psychometric testing, a technical interview and leadership scenario to inform the panel and ensure that the right candidates are shortlisted for final interview with members.
- 5.9 It is recommended that the Sub Committee is delegated authority to make a conditional offer to its preferred candidate and agree any relevant particulars, subject to a statutory process being undertaken in relation to the Executive

(see section 7.2.2 below) and any offer being the subject of full Council approval.

- 5.10 A number of stages will take place by remote means including the long/short listing meetings. Final interviews will take place in person at the Cube in Corby.

6 Next Steps

- 6.1 The recruitment campaign, including national and online adverts will commence in September 2023. Thereafter, following a period of long listing and shortlisting in consultation with the Sub-Committee, the Sub-committee (as the interview panel) will interview shortlisted candidates and appoint, as appropriate, a successful candidate.
- 6.2 A timetable of shortlisting and interview dates will be provided should these recommendations be approved.

7 Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1 Resources are required in terms of a time commitment from members and officers to participate in the long/short listing meetings and the interview panels. A timetable of dates will be provided shortly.
- 7.1.2 The cost of engaging Penna will be £14,950.
- 7.1.3 There are no additional financial implications arising from the proposal to appoint the sub-committee.

7.2 Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1 The Council must ensure that the appointment of statutory roles is managed in accordance with the Constitution. The recommendations proposed in this report will ensure that the correct process is followed.
- 7.2.2 In accordance with the local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England) Regulations 2001 (and as referenced in section 4 of Part 9.5 – Officer Employment Procedure Rules of the Constitution, an offer of appointment in relation to the relevant chief officer/s, may not be made until members of the Executive have been notified of the proposed appointment and within a required period of time, no material or well-founded objection has been received by the Proper Officer.
- 7.2.3 The appointment of the Head of Paid Service is reserved to Council.

7.3 Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1 Appointment to Head of Paid Service/Chief Executive will support the Council's Corporate Plan 2021 – 2025 and the key principle plans and policies.

7.4 Risk

7.4.1 There is a risk of challenge to the process if the correct procedure is not followed.

7.4.2 There is a risk to the Council if a thorough selection and recruitment process is not undertaken which could result in either the wrong candidate being recruited, or no successful applicant appointed.

7.4.3 There are no further risks to consider arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

7.5 Consultation

7.5.1 None required.

7.6 Equality Implications

7.6.1 The recruitment process for the post will be carried out in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and its Equality Strategy 2021- 2025.

7.7 Climate Impact

7.7.1 There are no specific climate impacts arising from this report.

7.8 Community Impact

7.8.1 There are no specific community impacts arising from this report.

7.9 Crime and Disorder Impact

7.9.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

8 Background Papers

8.1 Constitution of North Northamptonshire Council ([link to website](#))