

Council 7th December 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 recommend the appointment of a permanent Chief Executive for North Northamptonshire 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/Deputy Chief Executive, was appointed on an interim basis, pending the permanent recruitment to the role.
- 2.2 On the 17th of August 2023, the Employment Committee agreed to establish a Sub-Committee to undertake the recruitment and selection process for the role of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service; and that the recruitment and selection approach would be comprehensive and inclusive, enabling key stakeholders to be part of the process.
- 2.3 The Sub-Committee provided advice to the Assistant Director of Human resources in respect of longlisting and shortlisting of candidates, and then convened on 22 November 2023 to undertake the final selection process and their recommendations are detailed in this report.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that Council:
- 3.2 Approve the appointment of Adele Wylie to the positions of permanent Chief Executive, Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for North Northamptonshire Council; with an agreed start date of 27 January 2024.
- 3.3 That approval be given to appoint on a salary of £180,582, which is in accordance with the Council's agreed pay policy; plus returning officer/election fees, paid in accordance with the agreed legislative/local fees.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.4 These recommendations have been made following a comprehensive, inclusive and thorough recruitment and selection process, in accordance with the constitution, to ensure that the right candidate is selected to undertake the statutory designation of Head of Paid Service and the Chief Executive role at North Northamptonshire Council.

Alternative Options Considered

- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 The Council could decide not to permanently recruit to this role. However, the role is critical in leading the council forward to deliver the corporate priorities and ensure the best possible service and outcomes for our residents and communities.

4 Report Background

- 4.1 The Employment Committee met on 17th August 2023 and agreed to establish a Sub-Committee, with delegated authority to undertake the recruitment process to appoint a new permanent Chief Executive/Head of Paid service designation. The Committee also agreed to delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Human Resources, in consultation with members of the established Sub Committee, to longlist and shortlist suitably qualified applicants.
- 4.2 The Employment Sub-Committee comprised:
 - Councillor Jason Smithers – Leader of the Council - (appointed as Chair of the Sub Committee)
 - Councillor Emily Fedorowycz - (Leader of the Green Alliance Group)
 - Councillor Helen Howell – Deputy Leader of the Council
 - Councillor Matt Keane - (Leader of the Labour Group)
 - Councillor Lora Lawman – (Member of the Conservative Group)
 - Councillor Russell Roberts - (Member of the Conservative Group)

- 4.3 A national recruitment campaign was launched in September 2023 for the permanent Chief Executive role and a recruitment partner (Penna) was appointed to attract and source the best talent in the market.
- 4.4 At the direction of the Employment Committee, the Assistant Director for Human Resources (HR), in consultation with members of the Employment Sub-Committee, developed and agreed an inclusive and holistic selection and interview process which involved a number of stages to test all elements of the role. These included a technical assessment stage, partner, member and employee stakeholder panels and a main appointment panel.
- 4.5 The Assistant Director HR received a total of fourteen applications at the beginning of October 2023. In consultation with members of the Employment Sub Committee, five candidates were longlisted on 17th October 2023. A technical assessment was undertaken shortly after by the Council's appointed recruitment partner and an experienced Chief Executive of another unitary authority, following which it was determined that all five longlisted candidates would be shortlisted for the next stages.
- 4.6 Assessment and interviews took place over a two-day period; with the first day (Tuesday, 21st November 2023) involving six stakeholder panels – the Member Panel (comprising representation from all recognised political groups, excluding those on the Employment Sub Committee); Corporate Leadership Team Panel, Partners Panel, Leadership Panel (senior leaders and Assistant Directors) from all directorates), Children and Young People Panel and Employee & Trade Union Panel. The candidates completed presentations, created and delivered engagement sessions and answered questions during these Panels.
- 4.7 The Sub Committee received a briefing on best practice recruitment and selection protocols prior to the interviews, including equality and diversity considerations and awareness of unconscious bias.
- 4.8 The final interviews, undertaken by the Sub Committee, were held on Wednesday, 22nd November 2023. The Assistant Director of Human Resources and the Managing Director of the Council's chosen executive search partner Penna were also present.

5 Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The conclusion of the Sub Committee was to recommend the appointment of Adele Wylie as North Northamptonshire's permanent Chief Executive and designated Head of Paid Service.
- 5.2 Adele is currently Executive Director for Customer and Governance and Monitoring Officer at North Northamptonshire Council. She is also the interim Deputy Chief Executive.
- 5.3 Adele brings a wealth of leadership experience and has a strong track record in driving excellence in public service delivery. Her career in local government

includes her current role, successfully leading HR, Customer Services, Legal and Democratic services. Prior to this, she held the positions of Director of Governance and Regulatory Services at Melton Borough Council with responsibilities including environmental health, licensing and enforcement and Head of Service at Rutland County Council where she led both in-house services and delivered financial and operational efficiencies in outsourced services. Adele has a strong passion and a clear vision for continuing to build an ambitious, modern council with residents at its heart and shaping the place agenda with communities and partners.

- 5.4 Should Full Council agree this recommendation, Adele will start in the role on 27 January 2024. The role was advertised at a salary between £174,475 - £184,625 (with a national pay award pending). The chief executive national pay award was recently agreed (3.5%) and therefore the revised salary scale is £180,582 - £191,087 to reflect this uplift. The salary offer will be made at the bottom of the salary range, in accordance with the agreed NNC Pay Policy.
- 5.5 The Council could decide not to permanently recruit to this role. However, the role is critical in driving and leading the council's future vision and roadmap to ensure the best possible services and outcomes for our residents and communities.
- 5.6 The Monitoring Officer is also a statutory appointment pursuant to section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and is accountable to the Council. It is an appointment of Council and is currently held by Adele Wylie in her current post as Executive Director of Customer and Governance. Legislation prohibits the Head of Paid Service also being the Monitoring Officer and therefore a designation to another person is required, should Adele be appointed as Head of Paid Service. Pending approval, discussions will be commence regarding the interim and permanent Monitoring Officer designation, which will need to be approved by Council at a future meeting.

6 Next Steps

- 6.1 If approved, and subject to the satisfactory employment checks, the appointment will be made.

7 Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1 Resources were required in terms of a time commitment from members and officers to participate in the long/short listing meetings and the interview panels.
- 7.1.2 The search and selection fee for the preferred search partner, Penna, was £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 The appointment to Head of Paid Service/Chief Executive will support the Council's Corporate Plan 2021 – 2025, the continued transformation agenda and other key strategies and plans that deliver the best outcomes for our residents.

7.4 Risk

7.4.1 A comprehensive and robust recruitment process has been conducted/undertaken to ensure that the most suitable candidate has been recommended for this appointment.

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

7.5 Consultation

7.5.1 None required, although a range of stakeholder panels participated in the recruitment exercise, as detailed in 4.6 above.

7.6 Equality Implications

7.6.1 The appointment process followed a fair and transparent process in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and its Equality Strategy 2021- 2025. Eligible candidates were invited to apply to a national and open recruitment campaign.

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](#))