

## Appointment of Chief Executive

To: Staffing and Appeals Committee

Meeting Date: 24 August 2021

From: Monitoring Officer and Director of Law & Governance, Fiona McMillan

Purpose: Consider and approve commencement of the process to recruit a new Chief Executive for Cambridgeshire County Council.

Consider and approve the proposed job description for Head of Paid Services/Chief Executive for approval, making any necessary proposals for changes and, if required, delegating authority to finally approve the job description to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair of Staffing and Appeals Committee

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# 1. Background

- 1.1 This report arises following the resignation of the current Chief Executive due to reasons of retirement, and the subsequent need to recruit a replacement.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide the Staffing and Appeals Committee with the opportunity to share views and feedback on the job description and be satisfied that it accurately reflects the requirements of the role, and to give approval for recruitment to commence for a Chief Executive for Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 1.3 Prior to 2016, Gillian Beasley held the post of Head of Paid Service/Chief Executive in Peterborough City Council (PCC) and since this time she has occupied the same shared role with Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC). As a consequence of her retirement announcement, which is due to take place towards the end of 2021, the sharing agreement automatically ceases when she leaves. It is therefore necessary to undertake a recruitment process to find a replacement and to review and decide if a new sharing arrangement should be put in place.
- 1.4 The Leaders of both councils have carefully considered the significant challenges both PCC & CCC face in moving out of this lengthy pandemic. These challenges include recovery of services, recovery of the economy, continued response to COVID-19, support to the vaccination programme, and the significant financial pressure on each council's budgets. In addition, the new Chief Executive will need to lead work on establishing the financial security of the council to provide vital services into the future. These are challenges which are significant to both councils and as a result it is recommended that a Chief Executive is appointed for each Council when Gillian retires.
- 1.5 The Leaders are also still considering the future of other shared roles and arrangements and these will be subject to more detailed discussions over the coming months. Where these services are clearly helping to deliver strong outcomes for residents and communities or making the council more resilient, shared services will continue to be an option.
- 1.6 With the return to a dedicated Chief Executive for each council, it is evident that this will involve increased costs, but it is also clear that the roles will have new and unique targets to deliver. The current Chief Executive's salary is £173,596, of which both councils pay half. She has taken no pay inflation uplifts since 2017.
- 1.7 The established grade on the CCC payscale for the Chief Executive post is £192,264 - £213,225. By recruiting for a Chief Executive solely for CCC there will be an increase in cost of at least £105,466 if appointment is made at the bottom of the scale.
- 1.8 The size, scale and complexity of this role combined with the challenging financial position of the council and the climate following the Covid-19 pandemic, indicates the salary band for this role is set at the right level to fulfil these leadership requirements, and is consistent with other organisations of a similar size.
- 1.9 The Council also has a statutory duty to appoint an Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer in accordance with Section 5(7) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Sections 8, 35 and 52 of the Representation of the People Act 1983

respectively. The new Chief Executive would be expected to be appointed to these positions as well.

- 1.10 The existing Job Description is currently being refreshed to make sure it adequately reflects the present and future challenges that lie ahead, as well as taking account of best practice in this area. An updated version will be circulated ahead of the committee meeting for Members to read in advance.

## 2. Main Issues

- 2.1 Subject to the Committee's approval, the role will be advertised at the beginning of September with interviews likely to take place in late October. The recommendation of the Staffing and Appeals Panel will then go to a subsequent Full Council meeting for an appointment to be made.
- 2.2 The role will be advertised externally with the help of a search and selection agency who will support the full process.
- 2.3 Under Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended), the Council has a legal duty to appoint one of its officers as Head of Paid Service. Under the Council's Constitution this role is performed by the Chief Executive. The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 and the Council's Constitution provide that full Council must approve the appointment of the Council's Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer.
- 2.4 The Council's Officer Employment Rules set out that Full Council will approve the appointment of the Head of Paid Service following the recommendation of such an appointment by the Staffing and Appeals Committee.
- 2.5 The Full Council may only make or approve the appointment of the Chief Executive where no well-founded objection has been made by any member of the Staffing and Appeals Committee.

## 3. Source documents

- 3.1 A further Staffing and Appeals Committee will be arranged to undertake the appointment process and make a recommendation to Full Council for ratification of the appointment to Head of Paid Service.
- 3.2 Given the specific and particular need for the two Chief Executives of CCC and PCC to work closely together, not least because of the ongoing sharing of some services, one

search and selection agency has been commissioned to manage both processes.

3.3 A thorough search and selection process will be carried out which will include:

- Preliminary technical interviews
- An Assessment Centre with stakeholder panels including partners and Members
- Psychometric testing
- Final interview with Staffing and Appeals Committee

3.4 With the post of Head of Paid Service/Chief Executive being the highest officer level within the organisation, it is critical that this position is filled with the right appointment without delay. If recruitment to a permanent appointment is unsuccessful, it may mean that consideration has to be given to looking at an interim position in the short term before returning the market for a permanent role.

## 4. Appendices

4.1 Appendix 1 – Job Description Head of Paid Service/Chief Executive. The current Job Description is attached but is currently being reviewed and updated, and an updated version will be circulated ahead of the Committee meeting date.

4.2 Appendix 2 – Structure chart for CCC's Senior Management Team.