

Bassetlaw District Council

Appointments Committee

28 April 2022

Appointment of Chief Executive

Report of the Head of People and Culture

Cabinet Member: Cllr S Greaves

Contact: Karen Childs

1. Public Interest Test

- 1.1 This report is confidential. The author's view on the public interest test was that this report contains information that is likely to reveal the identity of individuals. Because of this and since there does not appear to be an overwhelming public interest requiring the disclosure of confidential information relating to employees, the author feels that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest test in disclosing the information.
- 1.2 Members are asked to consider this factor when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting

2. Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide options for the appointment of a permanent Chief Executive, in accordance with the recommendations approved by the Appointments Committee at its meeting on 9 June 2021.

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1 As a consequence of the retirement in August 2021 of the previous Head of Paid Service and Chief Executive, Neil Taylor, Council approved interim arrangements to ensure continuity and stable leadership during a period of unprecedented change. The interim Assistant Chief Executive and the interim Director of Corporate Resources were approached and the former, David Armiger, expressed an interest in acting as interim Chief Executive and, following an interview process, was duly appointed.
- 3.2 These arrangements were approved for a minimum period of six months, during which time a further report would be brought setting out options for filling the post on a permanent basis, following approval from the Leader to commence that process.
- 3.3 In considering options for permanent recruitment, and following discussions with David Armiger and Cabinet colleagues, the Leader of the Council is of the view that the current interim appointment had shown Mr Armiger to be an excellent choice. Furthermore it is felt that the temporary nature of the role is hampering the ambitions and proposals for the future progression of the Council. Other interim arrangements,

including that of the Director of Corporate Resources, have since been resolved. As such, the Leader has approved the commencement of the process for a permanent appointment.

3.4 The Council has a duty under section 4(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to designate one of its Officers as the Head of Paid Service to be responsible for specific statutory functions. The Council's Constitution provides that the Chief Executive is also designated Head of Paid Service, and details the associated duties and responsibilities.

3.5 The Appointments Committee is responsible for undertaking the recruitment and selection process for the Chief Executive and for recommending to Council whom to appoint.

4. Implications

a) For service users

The appointment of a Chief Executive on a permanent basis will establish security of leadership to focus on the significant change programme that the Council has embarked upon following the pandemic, to ensure excellence in service delivery.

b) Strategic & Policy

The Council is continually changing as service trends emerge and the landscape for local services change.

c) Financial - Ref: 23/670

Should a decision be made to advertise the position externally, the costs will be met from existing budgets.

d) Legal – Ref 08/04/2022

The legal requirements for the Council to designate an Officer to be the Head of Paid Service, is mentioned in the body of the report at 3.4. The Head of Paid service is also the Chief Executive, as provided for in the Council's Constitution. Each of the options set out in this report is a lawful way of filling the position.

e) Human Resources

As set out in the body of the report.

f) Community Safety, Equalities, Environmental

None arising directly from this report.

g) General Data Protection Regulations

This report contains information likely to reveal the identity of individuals. Such data is being processed to satisfy the legitimate interests of the Council to ensure proper decision making and allocation of the right level of resources to deliver services, in accordance with authorities delegated to Cabinet as set out in the Council's Constitution.

h) This is not a Key Decision.

5. Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 The options available are as follows:

3.4.1 To recommend to Council the appointment of David Armiger as Chief Executive, Head of Paid Service and Returning Officer on a permanent basis, or

3.4.2 To undertake an internal competitive recruitment process, which could optionally be ring-fenced to second tier officers, or to second and third tier officers (ie down to Head of Service level), or

3.4.3 To undertake an external competitive recruitment process.

5.2 The Appointments Committee has previously carried out a thorough assessment of the suitability of Mr Armiger to act as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, and deemed him to be suitable for appointment on merit. A recommendation to confirm him in post on a permanent basis would continue to provide stability of leadership and enable the progression of the Council's plans with that leadership secured.

5.3 The second option would be to go to an internally advertised recruitment process, that the interim Chief Executive could also apply for in competition with others. An internal process would be quicker and less costly than an external one. However, it should be noted that an internal process was carried out only recently to appoint to the position on an interim basis (ring-fenced to second tier officers), only one person expressed an interest and there has been no change in personnel since that time.

5.4 The third option is to go to an externally advertised recruitment process, that the interim Chief Executive could also apply for in competition with others. This would potentially provide the widest choice of candidates and helps to demonstrate transparency and a perception of fairness to the workforce. However it would be a costly exercise over several months and could result in the current interim choosing not to apply or to become disaffected and/or consider roles outside of the Council during the interim period. This could result in a loss of continuity and stability for the Council.

6. Recommendations

6.1 That the Appointments Committee considers the options for appointment of the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on a permanent basis, and determines the preferred approach from those available, which will then be progressed.

Background Papers

Location

None