

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Chief Officer Employment Committee held in the Trent Meeting Room at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Wednesday 25 April 2012 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillor Jackie Brockway (Chairman – in the Chair)
Councillor David Cotton

Councillor Alan Caine
Councillor Ian Fleetwood
Councillor Burt Keimach
Councillor Jessie Milne
Councillor William Parry

In Attendance:
Manjeet Gill Chief Executive
Elaine Pepper Human Resources Manager
Katie Coughlan Senior Democratic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Chris Underwood-Frost

Membership: Councillor Jessie Milne substituting for Councillor Chris Underwood-Frost

17 MINUTES

Meeting of the Chief Officer Employment Committee held on 22 November 2012.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Chief Officer Employment Committee held on 22 November 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

18 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present, declared a personal interest in report COEC. 07 11/12 (Future Chief Officer Responsibilities), as all of the Officers named therein were well known to them.

19 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

20 FUTURE CHIEF OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES (COEC.07 11/12)

Members gave consideration to a report which presented proposals relating to Chief Officer future responsibilities, for agreement.

In presenting the report the Chief Executive advised of the need to re-allocate the Chief Officers' responsibilities, following the resignation of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources, for whom well wishes, were placed on record.

The Committee were provided with contextual information in support of the proposal, which it was considered would further assist in developing the Authority's Officers and Managers, and thus ensure there was adequate succession planning. This was something the Committee had previously stressed to be of importance and the progress achieved to-date, including the redefined roles and responsibilities of both Heads of Service (former Service Managers) and Team Managers (formerly Team Leaders) was summarised to Members.

Finally the Chief Executive outlined her proposals for the future, which would result in the post of Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources being deleted from the establishment. The rationale for both deleting the post and re-allocating the responsibilities as outlined in Section 4 of the report was explained at length and in detail. Members noted those service areas where further financial challenges and major central Government reform were expected in the short term future and thus it was emphasised, that once a clearer position and any arising implications were known, it may be necessary to review the Chief Officer structure further.

In concluding, the Chief Executive stressed at length both the importance and advantages of affording flexibility in the short term and hence was the reason it was suggested temporary staff, with specialist skills, be utilised as required during the interim period.

Debate ensued during which Members posed a number of questions to the Chief Executive. Further clarification and greater detail in respect of several aspects of the proposal were also sought and duly received by Committee, including how deputising on a shared basis would work in practice, and the costs involved in engaging temporary staff for key work priorities. Re-

assurance was also sought that unforeseen events could still be tolerated, as a result of the streamlined Chief Officer structure.

Further debate ensued during which a number of differing views were expressed in respect of the proposed deputising arrangements and Members outlined some initial concerns, and reasoning for such.

In response, it was re-iterated that the proposal was viewed as a short term one only. The benefits afforded by utilising temporary staff was further expanded on; the cost of employing temporary staff was queried and before Members accepted that considerable progress could be achieved in priorities areas as a result, the Chief Executive Officer gave a detailed explanation of the benefits of such short term engagements. Furthermore, the Chief Executive outlined a number of potential future staffing options she was considering investigating.

Following further discussion, during which the Human Resources Manager shared with the Committee her personal experiences of the recent management development programme, and the considerable growth she considered Service Managers (Heads of Services) had made, Members were in agreement to there being a need to maintain flexibility in the short term. Notwithstanding those challenges which were anticipated, recommendation three was considered implicit to the proposals and having been proposed, seconded and subsequently voted on, was deleted.

On that basis, and having received confirmation that consultation had been undertaken with all affected staff, it was **RESOLVED** that:-

- a) the proposals detailed at Sections 4 and 5 of report COEC.07 11/12 be approved; and
- b) Full Council be **RECOMMENDED** to amend the Constitution as required in order to reflect those agreed changes arising from (a) above.

The meeting concluded at 6.48 pm

Chairman