

## 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 Monday 2 December 2013 commencing at 2.30 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Jackie Brockway (Chairman)  
Councillor David Cotton (Vice Chairman)

Councillor Alan Caine  
Councillor Giles McNeill  
Councillor Tom Regis  
Councillor Jeff Summers  
Councillor Anne Welburn

**Apologies:** Councillor Reg Shore  
Councillor Lesley Rollings

**Membership:** No substitutes were appointed for the meeting

**In Attendance:**  
Manjeet Gill Chief Executive  
John Houlihan HR Consultant  
Emma Redwood Team Manager – People and Organisational Development  
Katie Coughlan Governance and Civic Officer

### 27 MINUTES

(a) Meeting of the Chief Officer Employment Committee - 8 November 2013

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Chief Officer Employment Committee held on 8 November 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### 28 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members declared a non-pecuniary interest in that they knew the candidate to be interviewed.

## **29 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.

## **30 TO AGREE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

Mr Houlihan addressed the Committee reminding them of the current position within the process.

The Candidate, who would be interviewed later in the meeting, had undertaken an Assessment Centre test the week prior, the results of which would be shared with the Committee following the interview, as agreed at their previous meeting.

Members were provided with a copy of the Candidate's Statement, which he had prepared in support of his Application and again would be afforded the opportunity to review this, post the interview.

The Committee noted the Applicant would be giving a short presentation to Members based on the subject, "What would be your priorities in the first year as Chief Operating Officer and how would you achieve them", this would be followed by a period of questioning from the Committee.

Mr Houlihan reminded Members of the key considerations and questions they should keep in the forefront of their mind during the process, making reference to the presentation given by the Chief Executive at previous meeting in which the new role of the Council and Directors was set, including: -

- Can the Candidate undertake the new role?
- Does the Candidate demonstrate the qualities and competencies you as a Committee have previously expressed you require?
- Can they get the bigger picture?
- Can they seek out new opportunities?
- Do they have sound judgement?
- Engaging people - communication and commitment are key skills, does the Candidate demonstrate this?
- Collaboration - internally / externally, can the candidate encourage it and create it?
- Achieving results – the post has a large portfolio, can the Candidate deliver, do they give you confidence they can?
- Value for Money – will this individual help you? Do they have the know-how?
- Are they accountable and responsible? Will they lead?

Mr Houlihan then circulated the proposed questions to the Committee, a total of ten. It was noted that these had been set around the following key competencies: -

- Setting Direction
- Engaging People
- Performance / Delivering Results

The Chairman expressed concern that the Committee had only received the questions 30 minutes in advance of the interview and was of the view that it was important Members understood all of the terminology contained therein in order to be able to properly score the Candidate.

Members were offered the opportunity to delay the interview, in order to ensure an effective decision, but declined to do so on the grounds that it was unfair to the Candidate.

Mr Houlihan went through each question on an individual basis, explaining the intended purpose of each and what each question was trying to make Candidates demonstrate. The Committee were provided with examples of what a good Candidate should be able to demonstrate in answering the questions.

Members asked a number of pertinent questions to further aide their understanding.

It was re-iterated that Members had previously requested Assessment Centre results to be provided post interview and the Committee confirmed this to be the case.

All Members were provided with appropriate scoring sheets for both the presentation element and questioning element of the interview and again were advised of the key things that the Candidate should display during the interview and presentation.

### **31 INTERVIEW OF CANDIDATE**

**Note:** The Governance and Civic Officer left the meeting for the interview.

The Committee welcomed the Candidate to the meeting and invited him to make his presentation based on the brief: -

“What would be your priorities in the first year as Chief Operating Officer and how would you achieve them”.

Members then posed the agreed questions to the Candidate and responses were duly received. Supplementary questioning followed.

The Candidate was thanked for his attendance.

**Note:** The Governance and Civic Officer returned to the meeting following the interview and in advance of deliberations.

### **32 TO CONSIDER MAKING AN APPOINTMENT**

Members briefly shared their views in light of the information the Candidate had provided during the interview. They were also provided with a copy of the applicant's statement.

At the request of the Committee the Governance and Civic Officer left the meeting in order that Members could share their views more frankly.

The results of the Assessment Centre, along with the views of Mr Houlian and Mrs Gill on how the Candidate had performed in this area and interview were shared with the Committee.

**Note:** The Governance and Civic Officer returned to the meeting.

**Note:** Councillor Regis left the meeting before deliberations were concluded and therefore did not cast a vote.

Having considered all of the information provided by the Candidate, the results of the Assessment Centre and the candidate's Statement, and having had a discussion around the level of remuneration the Candidate should be appointed at, it was: -

**RESOLVED** that the Candidate (Mr Mark Sturgess) be appointed to the post of Chief Operating Officer, subject to any objections being made by the Policy and Resources Committee, prior to 4.30 pm on the 6 December 2013, in accordance with those requirements set out in Part V Page 64 of the Constitution.

**Note:** Councillor Cotton left the meeting at this point but did take part in the above vote.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Candidate be appointed at a salary of £80,000 and that suitable development criteria address development areas identified during this process.

### **33 NEXT STEPS**

Members noted the timetable that had been circulated with the agenda. Mr Houlihan advised that all indicative dates contained therein would need to be amended by 1 week, to allow extra time for the Christmas and New Year period, (ie) applications would close on the 13 January as opposed to 7 January.

**RESOLVED** that the timetable as verbally amended be noted.

**34 TO AGREE FUTURE COMMITTEE DATES**

**RESOLVED** that the next meeting of the Committee be held on 28 January 2014 commencing at 1.00pm for the purpose of long-listing candidates.

The meeting closed at 6.18 pm

Chairman