

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Chief Officer Employment Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall on 20 December 2021 commencing at 2.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway (Chairman)
Councillor Michael Devine (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Mrs Diana Rodgers
Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn
Councillor Mrs Angela White

In Attendance:

Ian Knowles Chief Executive
Tracey Bircumshaw Assistant Director of Finance and Property Services and
Section 151 Officer
Katie Storr Democratic Services & Elections Team Manager

Apologies: None received

Membership: No substitutes appointed for the meeting.

1 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) Chief Officer Employment Committee

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Chief Officer Employment Committee held on 16 December 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

3 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.

4 SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Members consider the report prepared and presented by the Chief Executive, which detailed proposals regarding the senior management structure.

In presenting the report the Chief Executive outlined the context in which the two phased proposal was being presented, the opportunities and future challenges facing the organisation in respect of Chief Officer recruitment and as such the rationale for wider changes to the structure.

Phase One, and which would be the priority, was the recruitment of a replacement S151 Officer transpiring from pending departures and a need to formalise current interim arrangements within the Management Team in light of recent departures, seeing the creation of a temporary Assistant Director Post.

The details of Phase One, including the financial and human resource implications were set out in Section 4 of the report provided to the Committee. Section 5 offered benchmarking data in support of the Phase One proposal and section 6 detailed the proposed recruitment route and timetable.

Members noted they would be required to meet formally to conclude the recruitment process for the Director of Corporate Services, by interviewing candidates, before making an appointment, noting a change to the date from that stated in the report.

The Chief Executive shared with Members the preferred supporting consultants and external officer support he would be seeking to support the Organisation and the Committee throughout the process. Members as always would receive refresher recruitment training in advance of meeting candidates. It was hoped the proposed timetable allowed for the new S151 Officer to be in place before the current designated Officer relinquished the post.

Given the Assistant Director post was not designated a Chief Officer the Committee would not be involved in its recruitment.

Phase Two, was subject to Phase One being approved, and aimed to create longevity and stability within the senior management structure particularly given the Council's ambitious delivery plan, the continued recovery from the Pandemic and the competitive recruitment market. Section 7 of the report further expanded on the rationale and context of the Phase Two proposal, which would see the deletion of three Assistant Director Posts and the creation of three Director Posts. Each of which would be designated as Chief Officer Posts in the next constitution review and therefore within the remit of the Committee, in the future, noting initial recruitment would be internal given staff would be placed at risk.

Phase One and Phase Two proposals could be delivered within existing budgets.

Members were asked to agree the Job Description, person specification and salary range for the Director of Corporate Services (S151Officer) in order that recruitment could commence without delay.

Debate ensued and Members challenged the phrasing of the advert in regards to the salary range. Explanation and rationale was offered by the Chief Executive. Members were accepting of the rationale and confirmed they satisfied with the range, including the upper limit, but outlined to Officers their preference as to how this should be reflected within the advert.

In response to further questions, the Chief Executive clarified line management arrangements under the Phase Two proposal, noting it streamlined the number of direct reports to the Chief Executive and increased accountability for those posts designated Directors. It was also confirmed the Committee had no responsibilities in terms of Chief Officers' day-to-day line management.

It was confirmed that Members would need to make themselves available for the entire day for final stage interviews.

The Committee commented on the extensive remit of a Section 151 Officer, it was stressed that the advertised post was wider than a Section 151 Officer and the current S151 Officer confirmed that whilst the post was legally responsible for all the S151 functions listed and laid out by legislation, day to day activities were distributed appropriately throughout the team.

A typographical error on page 14 of the minutes, approved earlier by the Committee, was identified late in the meeting, noting that resolution (b) required an addition "0" including, so as to read 112,000, as opposed to 112,00. The Committee were happy the amendment be made

Following discussion and questions, on being put to the vote it was: -

RESOLVED that: -

- (a) Phase One of the proposed structure be agreed for immediate implementation and the recruitment of a Director of Corporate Service (Section 151), and an Assistant Director People and Democratic Services be approved.
- (b) Delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman of Committee and the Leader of the Council to make minor amendments to the Job Description / Person Specification and recruitment timetable in respect of the Director of Corporate Services Post; and
- (c) Phase Two of the proposed structure be approved for implementation from April 2022 and in doing so approve the deletion of three Assistant Director Posts to create three Director Posts, to be designated Chief Officers.

The meeting concluded at 2.51 pm.

Chairman