

STAFFING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2025

Present: Cllrs Nick Ireland, Richard Biggs, Spencer Flower, Rob Hughes, Andrew Parry, Clare Sutton, Kate Wheller and Ben Wilson

Apologies: Cllrs Gary Suttle

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Erin Lawrence (Recruitment and Attraction Lead (HR)) and Chris Matthews (Head of Human Resources)

6. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Cllr G Suttle and Cllr S Flower had been asked to substitute for him.

Cllr Flower confirmed that he had reviewed all the documents prior to the meeting and stated that he possessed the necessary training to participate on the interview panel.

7. Election of Chair

It was proposed by Cllr B Wilson and seconded by Cllr C Sutton

Decision

That Cllr N Ireland be elected the Chair for the meeting.

8. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

9. Appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

The Staffing Committee received a report setting out the recruitment campaign and process for the appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

10. Exempt Business

It was proposed by Cllr N Ireland and seconded by Cllr A Parry

Decision

That the press and the public be excluded for the following item(s) in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 1 & 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

11. Appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

The Staffing Committee interviewed five candidates whose presentations to the committee and answers to questions were scored individually by each member.

Following the interviews the Staffing Committee received feedback about each candidate from Bryony Houlden (Chief Executive of South West Councils) who had chaired an external stakeholder panel and from Lisa Cotton (Corporate Director, Transformation, Customer & Cultural Services) who had chaired an employee panel.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr N Ireland and seconded by Cllr A Parry

Recommendation to Council (unanimous)

That Dr Catherine Howe be appointed to the post of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

Members of the committee wished to record their thanks to Erin Lawrence and the Recruitment Attraction Team for the professional way in which the recruitment and selection process had been run.

Duration of meeting: 9.00 am - 5.45 pm

Chair

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