

# Staffing Committee

2 September 2024

## Appointment of Executive Director of People - Children's Services

### For Decision

**Cabinet Member and Portfolio:**

Cllr. C Sutton, Children's Services, Education & Skills

**Local Councillor(s):**

All

**Executive Director:**

M Prosser, Chief Executive

Report Author: Lateefah Sulaiman

Job Title: HR Business Partner (Childrens Services)

Tel: 01305221621

Email: [Lateefah.Sulaiman@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Lateefah.Sulaiman@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

**Report Status:** Public (the exemption paragraph is N/A)

**Brief Summary:**

Consideration to appoint a permanent Executive Director of People - Childrens Services following interviews.

**Recommendation:**

To approve the interview panel's recommendation for the appointment of an Executive Director of People- Childrens Services on a permanent basis in the Children's Services directorate.

**Reason for Recommendation:**

As required by our constitution, the role of Executive Director of People - Childrens Services requires the approval of the Staffing Committee, as it is a Chief Officer role within the council.

## 1. **Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The position of Executive Director for Childrens Services is an integral part of Dorset Council Executive Leadership Team. This post leads the Children's Directorate Senior Leadership Team and directly reports to the Chief Executive of Dorset Council. Four Corporate Directors report to the Executive Director, namely: the Corporate Director for Care& Protection, Corporate Director for Education, Corporate Director for Commissioning, and the Corporate Director for Quality Assurance.
- 1.2 The current Executive Director for Childrens Services handed in her resignation to leave Dorset Council at the end of October 2024 to explore new opportunities both personally and professionally. This role is pivotal in sustaining the momentum of improvement within the council's Children's services and is being filled on a permanent basis.

## 2.0 **Appointment Process for Executive Director of People- Childrens Services**

- 2.1 The role was advertised externally from 09 July – 14 August 2024. It was promoted broadly, including the use of social media channels and targeted advertising, to ensure a strong field of applicants.
- 2.2 Eleven applications were submitted for the position. Subsequently, a shortlisting panel convened on 19 August 2024, comprising Cllr N Ireland, Cllr C Sutton, and Matt Prosser Chief Executive. Following shortlisting, it was determined that six candidates would be invited to a technical interview and selection process.
- 2.3 A technical interview took place on 28<sup>th</sup> August with Helen Lincoln-Director of Childrens Services Essex, as the Expert Assessor.
- 2.4 Successful candidates following the technical interviews attended the Children & Young People's Panel on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2024 and a formal selection programme on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 which consisted of three separate panels: a stakeholder panel, a staff panel, and a member formal interview panel including Councillors.
- 2.5 The panel members listed below participated in a face-to-face formal interview on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024. The Member Panel consisted of:

Cllr Nick Ireland (Chair)

Cllr Clare Sutton (Lead Member for Children's Services)

Cllr Bridget Bolwell (Chair of Corporate Parenting Board)

Cllr Andrew Parry (Leader of the Opposition)  
Cllr Byron Quayle

**Advisors to the panel:**

Matt Prosser, Chief Executive  
Lateefah Sulaiman, HR Business Partner

2.6 The Stakeholder Panel included external stakeholder representatives from partner organisations- Paula Golding (Dorset Council), Stewart Dipple (Police), David Freeman (Health- ICB), Fay MacRitchie (Education), Jon Sloper (Help & Kindness) and a representative from Dorset Parent Carer Council.

2.7 The Staff Panel included Dorset Council Senior Managers and Business Partners including a Union representative.

2.8 A Children and Young Panel provided invaluable feedback.

**3.0** As a result of the interview and selection process, the Formal Panel are making a recommendation to the Staffing Committee for the appointment of one of the candidates to the post of Executive Director of People- Childrens Services

**4.0 Financial Implications**

The post will be paid at Executive Director salary level and costs will be managed within budget.

**5.0 Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

None

**6.0 Well-being and Health Implications**

None

**7.0 Other Implications**

None

**8.0 Risk Assessment**

8.1 Having considered the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

## **9.0 Equalities Impact Assessment**

The post has been recruited to in accordance with the council's equality and diversity policies.

## **10.0 Appendices**

None

## **11.0 Background Papers**

None