

# Staffing Committee

16 December 2024

## Appointment of Interim Corporate Director for Care & Protection, Children's Services

### For Decision

**Cabinet Member and Portfolio:**

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

**Local Councillor(s):**

All

**Executive Director:**

P Dempsey, Executive Director of People - Children

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

**Brief Summary:**

Consideration to appoint an interim Corporate Director for Care & Protection, following an interview.

**Recommendation:**

To approve the interview panel's recommendation for the appointment of a Corporate Director for Care & Protection, on an interim basis in the Children's Services directorate.

**Reason for Recommendation:**

As required by our constitution, the role of Corporate Director Care & Protection, 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 Corporate Director for Care & Protection is an integral part of the Children's Senior Leadership Team and directly reports to the Executive Director of Children's Services. The role is responsible for providing leadership and oversight of the Care and Protection function across all of Children's Services, to ensure high-quality services for children and families in alignment with national legislative frameworks in areas such as safeguarding, social work, adoption, and early help. The Care & Protection service Includes services such as Children's Advice and Duty Service (Multidisciplinary Front Door); Fostering & SGO service; Birth to Settled Adulthood service; Care Leavers and Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children; Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service; Children in Care; and Locality teams.
- 1.2 The previous Corporate Director for Care & Protection was promoted following their successful appointment to the role of Executive Director Children's Services on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024. A recruitment and selection process for a permanent Corporate Director was carried out on 28<sup>th</sup> October but no appointment was made.
- 1.3 Given the pivotal nature of this role in safeguarding and sustaining the momentum of improvement within Children's social care, a recruitment and selection process for an Interim Corporate Director has been completed and we wish to appoint a candidate with Staffing Committee's approval.
- 1.4 The interim appointment will ensure continuity of leadership and a smooth transition. The Executive Director and Portfolio Holder have decided that the council should appoint the interim Corporate Director for 6 months, with recruitment to the role on a permanent basis proceeding in the New Year.

## **2.0 Recruitment**

The recruitment of the Interim Corporate Director role was completed using a reputable agency, who undertook an exercise to promote the role and identify potential candidates. CVs were received, and these were shortlisted down to 1 candidate, who was invited for interview.

## **3.0 Appointment Process for Interim Corporate Director for Care & Protection**

When the Council is appointing a Corporate Director on a regular contract of employment, our usual approach is for the whole Staffing Committee to interview candidates and to then make the appointment decision. In this

instance, as the appointment is of an interim nature and there was a need to proceed swiftly with an interview, arrangements were made for an online interview process.

An interview with the preferred candidate was held with Paul Dempsey, Executive Director for Children's Services and the 3 existing Corporate Directors for Children's Services, with the candidate identified as appointable.

As a result of the interviewing process, the Portfolio Holder and Executive Director are making a recommendation to the Staffing Committee for the appointment of Carolann James, as the Interim Corporate Director for Care & Protection.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

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.