

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Staffing Committee – 02 March 2020

Report Title

Secondment to the role of Assistant Chief Executive

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Sharon Kemp, Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

To propose a fixed term secondment of an officer from the Local Government Association to the role of Assistant Chief Executive until the end of the calendar year following the resignation of the current post holder. The report also details a proposed approach to the recruitment of a permanent Assistant Chief Executive later in the year.

Recommendations

1. That, in accordance with Officer Employment Procedure Rule 6.1, the Staffing Committee approve the secondment of Judith Hurcombe from the Local Government Association to the role of Assistant Chief Executive effective from 20th April 2020 until December 2020.
2. That authority be delegated to the Senior Officer Appointments Panel to undertake the recruitment and selection process for the permanent appointment of a new Assistant Chief Executive later in the year.
3. That the thanks of the Staffing Committee be conveyed to the outgoing Assistant Chief Executive, Shokat Lal, for his service to the Council and the borough of Rotherham since 2016.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

Appendix 7 of the Constitution – Officer Employment Procedure Rules

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Secondment to the role of Assistant Chief Executive

1. Background

- 1.1 The Assistant Chief Executive, Shokat Lal, has given notice of his resignation from his post effective from May 2020 in order to take up the post of Executive Director of Core Services at Barnsley MBC. The current post holder was appointed in March 2016.
- 1.2 The post is responsible for the strategic management of the following key corporate services:-
 - Change and Innovation
 - Communications and Marketing
 - Democratic Services
 - Human Resources
 - Neighbourhood Services
 - Policy, Performance and Improvement

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The post of Assistant Chief Executive is key role in the Council's strategic leadership team. As well as providing strategic management of key corporate and support services driving improvement across the authority, the Assistant Chief Executive provides support to the Leader of the Council, Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny function at Member level.
- 2.2 Corporate improvement remains a key driver for the authority and given the forthcoming whole Council election, it is important that the post of Assistant Chief Executive is filled to support the post-election work in respect of Member Induction, ongoing Member Development and leading the preparation of key policy documents outlining the authority's strategic direction and purpose for the medium term.
- 2.3 Recruitment to this position will take approximately six months and given the important work to be undertaken in that period, as set out in paragraph 2.2 above, it is proposed that a secondment from the Local Government Association be approved whilst the recruitment process for a permanent appointment takes place later in the year.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Having considered the immediate priorities facing the Council, it is recommended that the Staffing Committee approve the secondment to the role of Assistant Chief Executive effective from 20th April 2020 to ensure the continued leadership of key corporate services during a period of significant activity to support Members following the whole Council election to be held on 7 May 2020.

- 3.2 The Council received support from the Local Government Association during the period of the Commissioner-led government intervention. During that time, the Council was supported specifically by Judith Hurcombe, Programme Manager at the LGA. Given Judith's varied experience of corporate governance, policy, performance and improvement working with local authorities across the country and her strong knowledge of the progress of the Council in meeting the expectations of Members, the people of the borough and external observers, it is proposed that Judith Hurcombe be seconded to the role Assistant Chief Executive until the end of the calendar year.
- 3.3 It is also proposed that Staffing Committee delegate authority to the Senior Officer Appointments Panel to undertake a recruitment and selection process to appoint to the Assistant Chief Executive role on a permanent basis. It is envisaged that this process will commence later in the year and a permanent appointment will be made before the end of the calendar year.
- 3.4 Both proposals are consistent with the requirements of the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, detailed in Appendix 7 of the Constitution.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 In preparing this proposal for consideration by the Staffing Committee, consultation has taken place with political group leaders from the Labour Group and the Brexit Party Group. Both group leaders have indicated support for the proposed secondment, the preferred candidate for the role and the proposed approach to the recruitment and selection process for a new, permanent Assistant Chief Executive.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Subject to the approval of the Staffing Committee, it is proposed that the secondment to the role of Assistant Chief Executive take effect from 20th April 2020.
- 5.2 Recruitment to the permanent role of Assistant Chief Executive is expected to take place later in the year, with the role expected to be filled before the end of the calendar year.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The cost of the secondment will be within the approved budget for the post. There are no other financial or procurement implications arising from this report. The Council's Pay Policy Statement provides for the Assistant Chief Executive to be paid £102k.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 The human resources implications are outlined within the key issues and options considered earlier in this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no direct implications for children and young people or vulnerable adults arising from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Fair pay structures are a requirement of employment and equalities legislation. There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

11. Implications for Partners

11.1 The post of Assistant Chief Executive is a key role in managing relationships with partner organisations in the borough, as well as providing a link between various communities, organisations and partnerships. The proposed secondment will ensure that the good progress made in recent years is maintained and built upon until a permanent appointment is made to the position.

12. Risks and Mitigation

12.1 Any vacancy to this role increases the risk that the Council will be unable to deliver continued improvement and achieve corporate goals. The proposed approach in seconding an experienced officer to this role until such a time as a permanent appointment can be made will maintain the focus on improving corporate services and maintain a strong senior officer leadership team for the Council.

13. Accountable Officer(s)

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