

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Staffing Committee - 17 December 2025

Report Title

Recruitment of Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

John Edwards, Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report sets out proposals to appoint to the post of Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement and other associated changes.

Recommendations

That Staffing Committee:

1. Note that the post of Assistant Chief Executive will be retitled to Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement;
2. Approve the request to fill the vacant post and refer the process to the Senior Officer Appointments Panel to undertake the recruitment process;
3. Note the intention to fill the post of Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement on an interim basis to provide appropriate capacity during the recruitment process for the substantive post;
4. Note that the post of the Strategic Director, Finance and Customer Services will be retitled to Executive Director of Corporate Services; and
5. Note that the posts of Assistant Director will be retitled to 'Service Director', and Strategic Directors will be retitled to 'Executive Director'.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

Localism Act 2011 Hutton review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector

Local Government Transparency Code 2015

Pay Policy Statement

Other Employment Procedure Rules

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Recruitment of Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement

1. Background

- 1.1 The Assistant Chief Executive resigned from their post on 31 July 2025. Since this date responsibilities of the post have been covered by the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services and temporary line management arrangements have been put in place through the Assistant Director of Legal Services and the Assistant Director of Human Resources.
- 1.2 The Assistant Chief Executive role covered the functions of Policy, Performance and Intelligence, Democratic Services, Neighbourhoods, Marketing and Communications, Organisational Development and Change, and Human Resources.
- 1.3 The resignation of the Assistant Chief Executive provided the opportunity for the incumbent Chief Executive to take some time to review the effective operation of the Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate in accordance with the new Council Plan, ensuring structures are designed to deliver outcomes for residents and deliver against the new Council Plan.
- 1.4 Postholders within the Assistant Chief Executive's Directorate, alongside Strategic Directors, have been engaged in this process. Following this review the Chief Executive has determined that significant strategic capacity is required to support Policy and Strategy and has redesignated the title of the Assistant Chief Executive role to reflect this. The only other change proposed is dealt with in paragraph 2.6 below.
- 1.5 This has resulted in the request to retitle the Assistant Chief Executive role to Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement. The role continues to report directly to the Chief Executive post and forms part of the Council's Strategic Leadership Team.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Staffing Committee is asked to give their approval to recruit to the post of Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement on a permanent basis.
- 2.2 As per the Officer Employment Procedure Rules and Code of Conduct, Staffing Committee is asked to agree plans to immediately begin the selection process and refer the matter to the Senior Officer Appointments Panel.
- 2.3 The salary for the post remains unchanged through the process of retitling the Assistant Chief Executive to Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement.
- 2.4 It is anticipated that the full recruitment process, allowing for advertising, selection and notice periods, may take 6 months. Due to demands identified during the period of temporary arrangements since July, including the impact on current postholders and the need for strategic capacity, a

formal interim arrangement is proposed whilst permanent recruitment takes place.

- 2.5 The functions of Human Resources and Organisational Development would transfer under the leadership of the Strategic Director Finance and Customer Services (with the Head of Organisational Development reporting to the Assistant Director of Human Resources and their title expanded to reflect this) to create a cohesive Corporate Services function.
- 2.6 On this basis it is proposed to retitle the Strategic Director, Finance and Customer Services, to Executive Director of Corporate Services, and for this role to continue to have formal deputy responsibilities for the Chief Executive in accordance with the terms of the Constitution.
- 2.7 As part of an opportunity to modernise the Council's infrastructure and to support recruitment and retention of staff, in accordance with our ambitions as an employer of choice, it is proposed that all Assistant Directors are renamed 'Service Director' and Strategic Directors are renamed 'Executive Director'. The exception to this is that the Director of Public Health will retain their existing title to reflect the national recognition for this title, and the new post reflected in this document (to demonstrate its direct alignment to the Chief Executive) will be titled 'Director of'.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 In accordance with usual process for the appointment of Directors, it is proposed that permanent recruitment should be undertaken by a Senior Officer Appointments Panel.
- 3.2 No other options are available for the appointment of this role or changes to the Council's establishment.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.
- 4.2 Consultation, in accordance with the Council's agreed policies, has taken place with the individuals whose terms and conditions are affected by the change.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 It is proposed to refer the recruitment process to the Senior Officer Appointments Panel.
- 5.2 The post will be advertised upon completion of due process and a timetable will be agreed in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Senior Officer Appointments Panel.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 Provision for the post of Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement is already in place within the Council's Budget; therefore, the current and future costs of the post are factored into the Council's financial planning.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The post carries significant strategic responsibilities as described in the report above. Should the Committee decide not to fill the post then there is a requirement set out in the Constitution (Paragraph 6.1 of the Officer Appointment Procedure Rules) for the Committee to suggest how the responsibilities of the post would be fulfilled.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 An appropriately rewarded workforce motivates employees and meets standards of fairness and equity required by employment legislation.
- 8.2 The detail of this report accords with due process within Council and relevant HR Policies and Procedures.
- 8.3 No other options are available to make the changes proposed.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 There are no direct implications 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.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report, although appointing to this strategic role will support continued leadership of the Council's strategies.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 This role will work corporately with Elected Members and external stakeholders to ensure the Council's vision, priorities and values are actively promoted and made a reality.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Failure to proceed with the appointment process to this role would create risk for the Council due to the responsibilities of the role.

Accountable Officer(s)

Lynsey Linton, Assistant Director, Human Resources

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	28/11/25
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	02/12/25
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	05/12/25

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