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| Board/Committee: | POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD |
| Date of meeting: | 25 April 2023 |
| Title: | ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE |
| Author: | CHIEF EXECUTIVE |
| Status: | For Decision |

Purpose

This report seeks authority from the Policy and Organisation Board for the establishment of an appointments sub-board and sets out recommendations for its composition for the appointment to the role of Chief Executive Officer (Head of Paid Service).

The current Chief Executive of Gosport Borough Council and Portsmouth City Council has resigned and is due to leave in the summer 2023. The council is required to make arrangements for the appointment of a suitable replacement.

The Board's approval is sought for the arrangements for this appointment.

Recommendation

1. Note the requirement to recruit to the post of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) following the resignation of the current incumbent in their substantive post at Portsmouth City Council and the subsequent impact on Gosport Borough Council.
2. The Board approve an appointments sub-board be established with power to act on behalf of the Board, such sub-board to consist of 3 members of the Liberal Democrat Group, 1 member of the Conservative Group and 1 member of the Labour Group.

1.0 Background

1.1 Following the formal resignation of the Chief Executive, David Williams, the council is taking steps to recruit a new incumbent to the role. The Chief Executive is also the statutory Head of Paid Service and as such is a statutory appointment pursuant to section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and as set out in the council constitution.

1.2 The Policy and Organisation Board have authority to recommend arrangements for appointment to the post of Chief Executive, and may appoint an Appointments Sub-Board with power to act on its behalf for such an appointment. The Sub-Board would then make its recommendation on the preferred candidate to Full Council. The final approval for the post of Chief Executive is required from Full Council.

2.0 Reasons for recommendation

- 2.1** The current Chief Executive leaves the Council's service in Summer 2023.
- 2.2** Whilst the current Chief Executive performs the role for both Portsmouth City Council and Gosport Borough Council, he already had 15 years' experience as chief executive, at both a district council and a unitary council at the time he was approached to take on the Gosport role. Undertaking both roles as a new or 'step-up' candidate is considered to be too great a challenge. Portsmouth City Council are currently advertising for a stand-alone chief executive, whilst making it clear to prospective candidates that they wish to continue the shared service arrangements with Gosport.
- 2.3** Gosport has the opportunity to consider the appointment of its current Deputy Chief Executive to the post and it is recommended to establish an Appointment Sub Board to undertake that recruitment exercise, interview and evaluation. If the Sub-Board is satisfied, it may recommend the candidate to Full Council. Only Full Council can make the decision to appoint a person as Chief Executive. Should the Sub-Board feel unable to make a positive recommendation to Full Council, then the Council would need to determine what recruitment path it wished to follow, and a further report would be put to Policy and Organisation Board
- 2.4** The issue of 'political proportionality' on the appointments sub-board has been reviewed by the Borough Solicitor and is appropriate and legal. The majority group on the council must have a majority on any sub-board. However, it is discretionary whether the Labour Group should be offered a seat. In the circumstances this is considered to be appropriate and desirable as the Chief Executive will work with all members of the council. It is also desirable for an in-coming chief executive to feel that they have the support and confidence of the whole council (at least at the start!).
- 2.5** The council remains committed to a shared management model with Portsmouth City Council and notes that this is not reliant on the two authorities sharing a Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service. The same view is held by Portsmouth City Council.

3.0 Risk Assessment

- 3.1** The contents of this report do not have any relevant environmental impacts and the recruitment processes will be undertaken in line with council equalities policies and therefore an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1** With the current Chief Executive's resignation the resulting vacancy,

including the statutory responsibility of Head of Paid Service, needs to be filled.

- 4.2** No offer of employment can be confirmed until the appointment recommendation is approved by the Full Council.

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| Financial Services comments: | Recruitment costs associated with the appointment of the Chief Executive will be met from current budget provision |
| Legal Services comments: | This report and its recommendations set out the requirements for statutory officer appointments in accordance with the council's constitution. |
| Equality and Diversity: | |
| Climate Change implications: | |
| Crime and Disorder: | |
| Service Improvement Plan implications: | |
| Corporate Plan: | |
| Risk Assessment: | Contained within the report at 3.1 |
| Background Papers: | |
| Appendices: | |
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