

COUNCIL MEETING – 10TH APRIL 2025

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM MANAGING DIRECTOR AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

A report from the meeting of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee held on 2nd April 2025

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report sets out the process undertaken for the recruitment of the Council's Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service as approved by Council on the 5th February 2025.

In accordance with the Constitution, the appointment of the Head of Paid Service is made by the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee subject to confirmation by the Council. The designation of Monitoring Officer is also made by the Council.

At its meeting on 2nd April 2025, the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee considered and recommended the appointments as set out in this report.

Recommendation

The Council is recommended to approve:

1. the appointment of Ian Harrison as the Council's Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service with effect from the 11th April 2025 for an initial period of 6 months. The role to include the statutory responsibilities of Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer.
2. That the post of Corporate Manager – Legal Services be designated as the Council's Monitoring Officer from the 11th April 2025 for an initial period of 6 months

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the recommendation of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee following the completion of the recruitment process for the Council's Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service.

2. DETAILS

- 2.1 The Council's Chief Executive, Paul Shackley is leaving the Council on the 6th May 2025 for reasons of redundancy. A recruitment process in line with the constitution and supported by South East Employers concluded on the 11th March 2025. This approach was agreed by the Council on the 5th February 2025.
- 2.2 The recruitment panel consisted of five Members, comprising The Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Conservative Group, the Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group, the Portfolio Holder of Finance & Resources and the Portfolio Holder of Pride in Place/Neighbourhood Services. The Director of HR & Employee Services from South East Employers was the key advisor to the panel throughout the process.
- 2.3 A revised Job Description and Person Specification for the role of Interim Managing Director was agreed, including the statutory responsibilities of Head of Paid Service, the Borough's Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer.
- 2.4 Members of the Executive Leadership Team were all invited to apply for the role. To assess their suitability, those members who applied were required to deliver a presentation followed by undertaking a formal interview session.
- 2.5 At the conclusion of this selection process, the recruitment panel has recommended that Ian Harrison, Executive Director be appointed to the role with effect from the 11th April 2025 for an initial period of 6 months.
- 2.6 The role of Head of Paid Service cannot carry the designation of Monitoring Officer (MO). The designation of the MO is there to ensure that the Council acts legally at all times. It is proposed that the role best suited for this designation is the Council's Corporate Manager – Legal Services. The current postholder is leaving the role on the 16th May 2025. By designating this role as the Council's MO the current postholder will carry the responsibility until the leaving date and then a new interim postholder will take over from this date. The interim postholder will then be appointed into the designated role in line with the constitution and the proper officer arrangements.
- 2.7 With the appointment of Head of Paid Service being made from the 11th April 2025 the existing Chief Executive will focus on handover and supporting the new role and the Leader ahead of his departure on the 6th May 2025.

3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

- 3.1 No additional implications beyond the report to Council 5th February 2025 with the exception of the redesignation of the MO role to the Corporate Manager – Legal Services post. The Monitoring Officer role is a statutory role under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Financial Implications

- 3.2 The previous report to Council highlighted a saving of £179,000 pa with no Chief Executive role. This proposal has an additional cost of £8,420 for the next 6 months.

Resource Implications

- 3.3 No additional implications beyond the report to Council 5th February 2025

Equalities Impact Implications

- 3.4 No additional implications beyond the report to Council 5th February 2025

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 This report follows the report approved by the Council on the 5th February 2025 and puts in place arrangements for the Head of Paid Service and Monitoring officer functions for the next 6 months.

CHAIRMAN OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE,
AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE
CLLR BILL O'DONOVAN