

COUNCIL MEETING – 2ND JULY 2026

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 (3)

APPOINTMENT AND DESIGNATION OF HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

SUMMARY:

At a special meeting on 1st July, the Licensing and Corporate Business Committee will consider a report setting out the outcome of the assessment process for the permanent appointment of the Council's Head of Paid Service following the cross-party Member Assessment Panel ([Report No. MD2606](#)).

In accordance with the Constitution, the designation of Head of Paid Service is made by the Council, and the appointment of the Head of Paid service is made by the Council on the recommendation of the Licensing and Corporate Business Committee.

Subject to consideration by the Licensing and Corporate Business Committee at its meeting on 1st July, the Council is **RECOMMENDED** to approve:

- 1) That the post of Interim Managing Director is redesignated to Chief Executive.
- 2) That the statutory designation of Head of Paid Service is redesignated to the post of Chief Executive.
- 3) That Ian Harrison be appointed as the Council's Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service with effect from 3rd July 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the outcome of the assessment process for the permanent appointment to the Council's Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service role.

2. BACKGROUND AND APPROACH

- 2.1 At the Licensing and Corporate Business Committee held on 16th June 2026 a cross-party Member Assessment Panel was established to consider the permanent appointment of the Council's Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.
- 2.2 The assessment panel consisted of four Members, comprising The Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, Cllr Masterson and Councillor Stewart.

- 2.3 The Panel met on 24th June 2026 to review and consider the performance of Ian Harrison, the Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service, alongside the outcomes of his performance objectives for the year 2025/26. Each Panel Member was provided with the opportunity to ask questions related to his performance objectives.
- 2.4 The Panel also considered the job title benchmarking information provided for the role of Head of Paid Service. This information included the job titles for all the Head of Paid Service roles at all the other Hampshire Local Authorities including the unitary councils. The findings demonstrated that all these roles are called 'Chief Executive'.
- 2.5 The Panel also reviewed and considered the salary benchmarking exercise provided by South-East Employers for the role of Chief Executive. This exercise provided comparator salary data from other Hampshire and Surrey local authorities to assist the Panel in determining the appropriate annual salary for the permanent Chief Executive.
- 2.6 The Panel also reviewed a proposed performance appraisal process for the Chief Executive based on the South-East Employers template to be implemented for the next performance review cycle and agreed this should be implemented and 360 appraisal considered.
- 2.7 The outcome of the Assessment Panel was reported back to the Licensing and Corporate Business Committee on 1st July with a recommendation that the Council redesignate the post of Interim Managing Director to Chief Executive and redesignate the statutory role of Head of Paid Service from the Managing Director post to the post of Chief Executive. This would ensure comparability with the Hampshire Local Authority Chief Executive job title.
- 2.8 The Assessment Panel also recommended the appointment of Ian Harrison as the permanent Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, and that the annual base salary for the role of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service be set at 130,000 per annum (for approval by the Committee). Alongside this, it was proposed to adopt the South-East Employers performance review process and procedure to be implemented for the next performance review cycle.

3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal Implications

- 3.1 The Council is required by s4 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to designate one of its officers as the Head of Paid Service. Currently the Constitution designates that statutory role to the post of Managing Director. The committee is therefore recommended, should it agree to alter the post of Managing Director to Chief Executive, to designate the Head of Paid Service to the post of Chief Executive.

Financial Implications

- 3.2 The additional cost of employment in a full year is £6,160. This is a permanent increase in the council's base budget and the cost pressure will be funded from within the overall current budget 2026/27 cost of the management team, as per the March and April 2026 Cabinet reports restructure proposals are currently being consulted to complete that process and achieve the objective set out within those reports.

Equalities Impact Implications

- 3.3 There are no equality implications arising directly from this decision. South-East Employees (SEE) have provided input into the original appointment process and the performance review process.

4. CONCLUSION

This report will put in place permanent arrangements for the Head of Paid Service and provide the Council with stability at Chief Executive level for the remaining life of the Council.

COUNCILLOR SARAH SPALL
CHAIR OF LICENSING AND
CORPORATE BUSINESS COMMITTEE