

Cheltenham Borough Council Appointments and Remuneration Committee Minutes

Meeting date: 2 August 2023

Meeting time: 6.00 pm - 6.30 pm

In attendance:

Councillors:

Councillor Rowena Hay (Chair), Councillor Jackie Chelin, Councillor Mike Collins, Councillor Tim Harman, Councillor John Payne, Councillor Julie Sankey and Councillor Julian Tooke

Also in attendance:

Gareth Edmundson (Chief Executive)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Atherstone and Flynn.

2 Declarations of interest

There were none.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2022 were approved and signed as a correct record.

4 Organisational Review

The Chief Executive introduced the report which was requesting the approval of interim arrangements to cover the imminent departures of two senior managers from the organisation and requested a regrading of a senior development manager post in

the major developments and construction team to ensure the team was strong enough to deliver the administration's capital ambitions.

He provided the context for the request for interim arrangements. It takes time to recruit to senior posts and it was important there continued to be flexibility to ensure the authority had the right capacity to deliver its corporate priorities and good services to residents. He highlighted that this review is timely since the recent LGA Peer review recommended a review of the climate pathway –to ensure the council was extending on the existing one including the delivery of more measurable targets. Additionally, the council was recommended to consider closer partnership working as well as delivering cultural improvements by bringing Human Resources back in house. The full Peer Review report had not yet been received but this did provide a timely opportunity to ensure any senior level posts we chose to recruit to are the correct ones.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that the organisational review was in 2 phases. Phase 1 was completed last year and phase 2 had evolved significantly. Interim resourcing of these posts could potentially mean 1 or more people to cover specific projects/specialisms as required and he gave the example of the climate change programme.

In terms of the regrading of the senior development manager position it was important to continue to strengthen and build the team to ensure that the right capabilities and skills were in place around major development and regeneration. There had been a significant shift from generic project resource to a specialist capital and construction team in place. The team should continue to grow with future recruitments since it now has a broader remit than the Golden Valley project.

The following responses were given to Member questions :

- The authority had a strong senior leadership team and whilst the vacancy could be a development opportunity for an existing employee, it was a question of managing existing workload so not to place too much pressure on any individual. It was not necessarily a direct replacement but could be a part time resource to support a specific project as previously mentioned.
- At the suggestion of a member, certain job titles in the major development team would be reflected upon to ensure there was no blurring of lines with the development control/planning function of the authority. Any changes would be reported back to this committee.
- The shared communications function with Cheltenham Borough Homes evolved to capitalise on the specialisms in the existing teams The council had moved away from the traditional communications model recognising that in the digital era a completely different skillset was now required. The challenge of the peer review was to reflect on whether we are maximising these shared skills and capabilities and avoiding duplication to achieve value for money.
- An example of releasing capacity at lower level was reflected in the recent decision to recruit to two lower level HR coordinators rather than at business partner level following the withdrawal of HR provision from Publica. The view was that more resource at a less senior level would be more effective. Part of

the second phase of the organisational review was considering widening capacity at lower level in order to retain more operational posts, retain increased resource to maintain the demand for services the council provides and deliver value for money.

- The direction of travel was not necessarily to bring back all services from Publica in house as the measure was whether the service was meeting the council's needs. The example was given of the highly valuable ICT shared provision via Publica which provided an excellent service. There was a particular need in terms of HR due to the cultural shift in the organisation requiring a more bespoke level of service.
- Recognising the unsettling nature of interim appointments, the Appointments Sub Committee would be requested to appoint a more focussed interim senior manager to avoid too much disruption in the organisation and to add value. This was particularly important since the Peer Review acknowledged that the organisation was moving in the right direction in terms of culture.

The Chair invited nominations to the Sub-Committee. Councillor Harman, as Member of the opposition, volunteered, with the caveat that Councillor Nelson would act as substitute should he not be in a position to attend. Councillors Tooke and Payne also offered to participate depending on the logistics of when the meeting would take place.

The Chief Executive explained that the process for appointing interims was less involved from a Member point of view and it was likely that 3-4 candidates would be interviewed. The final membership would be determined once the recruitment process had been fully considered.

RESOLVED THAT

- 1. the development of the organisational review as set out in the report be noted.**
- 2. The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to establish an appointments process for any necessary interim arrangements to facilitate and deliver the second phase of the organisational review.**
- 3. A sub-committee be appointed for the appointment of any interim arrangements to provide appropriate cover and capacity at Director level comprising of the Chair of the A&R committee and two other committee members.**

5 Local Government Act 1972 - Exempt Business

RESOLVED THAT

“in accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 1, Part 1, Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, namely:

- **Paragraph 1; Information relating to any individual.**
- **Paragraph 3; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)**

6 Exempt minutes

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2022 were approved and signed as a correct record.

7 Any other business the chair determines is urgent and requires a decision

None.

8 Date of next meeting

TBA