

Cheltenham Borough Council Appointments and Remuneration Committee Minutes

Meeting date: 26 September 2024

Meeting time: 6.00 pm - 7.00 pm

In attendance:

Councillors:

Councillor Rowena Hay (Chair), Councillor Victoria Atherstone (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jackie Chelin, Councillor Barbara Clark, Councillor Jan Foster, Councillor Andy Mutton and Councillor Peter Jeffries

Also in attendance:

Gareth Edmundson (Chief Executive), Shona Lovett (HR Manager) and Ann Wolstencroft (Head of Corporate Service)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Garcia Clamp.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Approve minutes of last meeting

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2024 were approved and signed as a correct record.

4 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.

5 Organisational Model Review

The Chief Executive introduced the report and explained that it represented the first stage of the journey to reshape CBC and CBH into one organisation. He thanked colleagues in HR for their support and incredible attention to detail throughout the transfer. He highlighted that the process would provide the Council with significant opportunities to create an integrated tenure neutral model that provides a customer centred approach for all Cheltenham residents whilst achieving savings.

The Chief Executive noted that this would be the first of many reports as the two organisations are combined and provided a draft operational model outlining where functions may sit within the Council. He explained that four senior posts had been approved by Cabinet to sit beneath the Chief Executive – the Deputy Chief Executive, the Director for Governance and Customers Services, the Director for Major Developments and Regeneration, and the Director for Corporate Services.

The report proposed that housing would be managed through the creation of two Directors. A Director of Housing – Investment, Repairs and Decarbonisation will sit beneath the Deputy Chief Executive and provide focus on property and housing stock. The role will drive compliance and service improvements, the decarbonisation of a large area of carbon emissions, and improve the health and safety culture within the organisation. The Director of Housing – Customer and Community Services will sit beneath the Director of Governance and

Customer Services and will focus on people and residents. In the medium term this role will be considering how we deliver excellent customer service and tenant engagement. In addition, it is proposed that a Head of System Development is appointed to resource the ongoing digital development of the housing management systems, QL and Versaa. This work is of significant importance in ensuring compliance, making sure we have a centrally located understanding of both properties and people, and meet the expectations of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).

The following responses were given to Member questions:

- The model will continue to evolve but is the first step to moving away from the current interim oversight of the operational housing functions and the proposed appointments will provide certainty and direction for the organisation.
- Whilst this appears to significantly increase the responsibilities of the Executive Directors' they will be supported by a number of Directors reporting into them which will enable them to focus on the strategic side of their positions. The proposed structure has been discussed and designed with the Executive Directors and they are comfortable with the proposal.
- Conducting property and operational compliance will sit with the Director of Housing – Investment, Repairs and Decarbonisation. Ensuring compliance more broadly will be managed by the Executive Director of Governance and Customer Services. This is a common approach that provides a safeguard to ensure compliance is being managed with clear oversight, with one team carrying out the operational work and a different team reviewing the paperwork and submissions.
- The management of health and safety will be an organisation wide responsibility and will involve working with departments such as Environmental Health and partnership organisations such as UBICO.
- The roles will be recruited to via appropriate recruitment methods.
- It is expected that once the Head of System Development has concluded the priority work on the housing systems, they will be able to broaden their remit to other systems and operations. As the role evolves over time it has the potential to add huge value across the business.

- A sub-committee was appointed to take part in the relevant recruitment. The sub-committee consists of the Chair, Councillor Foster and Councillor Garcia Clamp (subject to his approval). Should Councillor Garcia Clamp be unable to act on the sub-committee, Councillor Baker will be asked in his place. Appropriate training and support will be provided to members of the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Committee:

- a) **Noted the development of the organisational review as set out in this report.**
- b) **Approved the grades and budget for the proposed three new roles of:**
 - i. **Director of Housing – Investment, Repairs and Decarbonisation (Grade N)**
 - ii. **Director of Housing – Customer and Community Services (Grade M)**
 - iii. **Head of System Development (Grade M)**

These job titles may be subject to change following further engagement and implementation of the organisational model.

- c) **Authorised the Chief Executive and HR Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to follow appropriate process to appoint to the posts of Director of Housing - Customer and Community Services and Head of System Development as described in Section 4.**
- d) **Appointed a sub-committee, comprising of the Chair of the A&R Committee plus Councillor Foster and Councillor Garcia Clamp (subject to his approval). Should Councillor Garcia Clamp be unable to act on the sub-committee, Councillor Baker will be asked in his place to:**
 - i. **support the HR process where appropriate for the appointment to the posts of Director of Housing -**

Customer and Community Services and the Head of System Development.

- ii. comprise a recruitment panel for the appointment of the post of Director of Housing - Investment, Repairs and Decarbonisation, and to undertake the final interview and appointment process.**

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

There were none.