

Report to: **Personnel Committee**



Date of Meeting 17th October 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Chief Executive Recruitment

Report summary:

To advise on the recruitment process to appoint a new Chief Executive.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That Committee confirm the requirement to convene the Interviewing Sub Committee as part of the upcoming recruitment and selection process for the Chief Executive post and names are provided as soon as possible to support recruitment planning.

Reason for recommendation:

The appointment of the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) requires approval by Council, following the recommendation of the Interviewing (Chief Officers) Sub Committee, as set out in the Personnel Committee Terms of Reference and the Employment Procedure Rules.

Officer: Jo Fellows, HR Manager jfellows@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergency Response
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☒ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☐ Economy
- ☐ Finance and Assets
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Equalities impact Medium Impact

Recruitment and selection will be undertaken in accordance with employment and equality law and the Council's policy and procedures.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; Failure to recruit to this key and statutory role in the Council could lead to service disruption and an inability to undertake Council business.

Links to background information n/a

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ Better homes and communities for all
- ☐ A greener East Devon
- ☐ A resilient economy

Report in full

1. This report advises on the recruitment and selection process to appoint a new Chief Executive who will act as the Council's Head of Paid Service, Returning and Electoral Registration Officer.

2. Background

- The Chief Executive is employed on Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) Chief Executive terms and conditions.
 - The Council is required to have a designated Head of Paid Service who acts as the Council's Chief Executive. The Council is also required to have a designated Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer, which have traditionally also been part of the Chief Executive role and it is proposed that this continues.
 - The Council's Employment Procedure Rules (Part 4, paragraph 4.8 of the Constitution) state that full Council will approve the appointment of the Head of Paid Service following the recommendation of such an appointment by the Interviewing Sub Committee. The Sub Committee consists of seven councillors drawn from the membership of the Personnel Committee which shall include at least one member of the Cabinet, subject to the rules relating to political balance/proportionality (Personnel Committee Terms of Reference, Part 3, Section 2, paragraph 2.10.6).
3. An executive search agency has been commissioned to support the recruitment process. This is standard practice for roles at this level as it provides access to a wide range of potential candidates and specialist advice and support, which is particularly helpful given the continuing challenging employment market. This approach has also proved beneficial during the recent Director recruitments. The agency will develop a recruitment campaign, liaise with potential candidates and support the selection process. The costs of commissioning the agency will be covered by the salary costs saved whilst the post is vacant. The agency has begun high level preparatory work so that the Council can commence recruitment as soon as possible.

4. The planned timescale for the recruitment and selection process is as follows:
 - Mid October 2023 –preparatory work by the agency and go live with recruitment advert.
 - 19th November 2023 – closing date for applications.
 - w/c 20th November 2023 - initial sifting by the agency and recruitment briefing and longlist meeting with Interviewing Sub Committee.
 - w/c 27th November 2023 – preliminary interviews.
 - w/c 4th December 2023 – final shortlist and assessment centre briefing with the Interviewing Sub Committee. Psychometric and media testing for candidates.
 - w/c 11th December 2023 – assessment centre selection process, including Sub Committee interviews.
 - Early January 2024 – Council and Cabinet member objection procedures followed.
 - January – March/April 2024 – onboarding of successful candidate, commencement of employment (subject to notice requirements) and commencement of induction.
 5. The Interviewing Sub Committee will be required to make recommendations to full Council about the proposed appointment and it is proposed that Sub Committee membership is confirmed as soon as possible to enable the HR Manager and executive search agency to undertake preparatory work with the Sub Committee in advance of the selection process.
 6. The existing interim arrangements agreed with Full Council to cover the Chief Executive's duties will continue until the appointment of the new postholder.
 7. Committee will be kept informed of progress.
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Financial implications:

Council have approved a £30k budget for a recruitment budget. Having received further details from the recruitment agency the costs are likely to be in the order of £35k, the additional costs can be recovered from savings made from the CEO salary budget currently being made.

Legal implications:

As is outlined in the report, the procedure for the recruitment of a Chief Executive is set out in the Officer Procedure Rules. This requires appointment by Full Council following a recommendation by the Interviewing Sub-Committee. Full Council can only appoint where no well-founded objection has been made by a Member of the Cabinet. Council makes the final decision on whether a complaint is well-founded.