



WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT COMMITTEE

Tuesday 7 January 2020

Report Title	Permanent Statutory Officer Recruitment
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report outlines the proposed approach and timetable in relation to the permanent recruitment of statutory roles for the West Shadow Unitary Council.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the WNJC endorse:

- 2.1.1 The key milestones and timescales for permanent recruitment.
- 2.1.2 The tendering specification (Appendix 1) and that the tendering process is started in January 2020; and a provider engaged for February 2020.
- 2.1.3 Next steps:
- West Joint Committee to agree permanent Statutory Officer job descriptions and remuneration packages (January 2020).
 - To advertise the roles nationally through search agency (*subject to agreement of job descriptions, remuneration packages and Statutory Changes Order being agreed.*)

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 For interim statutory officer appointments, the draft changes order specifies that these roles must be undertaken by existing officers of the District, Borough and County Councils in Northamptonshire. Subject to the draft statutory order being 'made' into legislation and a vesting day date of 1 April 2021, the interim statutory roles will need to be in place in May 2020. A separate paper on this process is also on the agenda.

The draft order is less directive in regards to the permanent statutory appointments, other than appointments can only be made after the structural order has been laid and that permanent appointments must be in place by 31 December 2020. It is however beneficial that the permanent officers are

recruited at the earliest opportunity to provide the necessary leadership, stability and continuity to the new shadow authority.

In order to allow for a comprehensive search and selection process and to accommodate potential notice periods of up to 3 months; it is proposed that the permanent statutory officer recruitment, starting with the Head of Paid Service, commences in February 2020 and that appointments take place from May to July 2020; so that officers will be in role at the earliest in September/October 2020 (but no later than 31 December 2020).

3.1.2 Recruitment Approach

The permanent roles of Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, the Statutory Director for Adult Services and the Statutory Director for Children's Services will be critical appointments before the new unitary council commences in April 2021. It is therefore recommended that the recruitment process comprises a national campaign that is supported by a professional search in order to identify the best candidates for the roles.

The selection process for the permanent statutory roles will involve elected shadow council members. Statutory Officer permanent appointments will be ratified in accordance with the agreed constitution for the shadow authority.

3.1.3 High Level Timescales and Project Plan

A detailed permanent recruitment project plan is currently being finalised around the following high level key milestones and actions:-

Action	Date
Executive Search specification to be developed and agreed	Jan 2020
Agree permanent statutory officer role profiles	Jan 2020
Agree remuneration and terms and conditions for roles	Jan 2020
Procure Search and Select Agency for both authorities	Jan 2020
Launch National Recruitment Campaign*	Feb 2020
Executive screening process	Mar 2020
Agree/confirm selection panel and selection approach	Mar 2020
Technical interviews	April 2020
Longlisting/Shortlisting Head of Paid Service	May 2020
Interviews for Head of Paid Service	May/June 2020
Appointment of Head of Paid Service	May/June 2020
Longlisting/Shortlisting for other Statutory Roles	May/June 2020
Interviews for other Statutory Roles	June/July 2020
Appointment of other Statutory Roles	June/July 2020

**These dates are subject to the Statutory Changes Order being anticipated in February 2020.*

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy and Process – External Search and Select Agency

- 4.1.1 One of the first key actions that will need to be progressed in early January is to undertake a tender process to secure an external search and selection agency who will manage the recruitment section of the process.

A draft tender specification document has been prepared (Appendix 1) and comprises the following key elements:

- Provision of market research and evidence-based advice on salary packages
- Launch of a national advertising campaign and executive search function
- Facilitation of shortlisting and longlisting, including technical interviews and briefings to member panel

The joint committee are asked to agree the tendering specification (Appendix 1) and that the tendering process is started in January 2020, and a search agency engaged in the same month.

4.2 Next Steps

- 4.2.1 The next steps for the West Northamptonshire Joint Committees or nominated sub-group/s will be to finalise the permanent job descriptions for the statutory roles and the remuneration package associated with these roles; in preparation for recruitment/national search commencing in February 2020 at the earliest. Benchmarking around salary packages will be prepared to support this.

Integral to this piece of work will be discussion and consideration of the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 posts, as these roles are not always substantive roles in themselves, often attached to posts in the overall management structure, which needs to be determined. The Section 151 officer role, for example, can be undertaken within a wider Corporate Director Resources role. The fact that the Statutory Changes Order says that the interim posts expire at the end of December 2020 means that early decisions will have to be made on the permanent management structure to ensure permanent statutory officers are in place by then.

There is flexibility in regards to the high level timescales detailed above to enable these discussions to take place. February is the earliest date proposed for the launch of a national advertising campaign, starting with the Head of Paid Service role.

4.3 Finance and HR Resources

- 4.3.1 This report is about permanent recruitment and proposes the engagement of an external search agency; the costs for which will be met from the budget allocated within the LGR programme budget.

The permanent recruitment support by HR will be provided by the Integrated Future Northants team; in liaison with the HR leads in each sovereign council. It is recommended that a search agency from the external market is engaged

for the North/ West roles, to ensure that the best candidates are identified nationally, at an effective cost.

4.4 Legal

- 4.4.1 If permanent appointments are not made or there is a delay in the required legislation, the Interim Statutory Officers' tenure could be extended. If there is no delay in legislation, permanent appointments must be in place no later than 31 December 2020.

4.5 Equality and Health

- 4.5.1 None

APPENDIX 1

Recruitment Brief

Permanent Statutory Officer Recruitment - Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, Statutory Director for Adult Services, Statutory Director for Children's Services.

On 14th May 2019 the Secretary of State announced that the future of local government in Northamptonshire would be two new unitary authorities.

The Draft Northamptonshire Structural Changes Order 2019 (SCO), which sets out how the two new unitary authorities will be formed to replace the existing eight councils on 1 April 2021, was laid before Parliament prior to the December 2019 General Election. The draft Order is in the process of being made into legislation.

The brief is therefore to support the recruitment of the permanent Statutory Officers to the new authorities.

This will comprise:

Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, Statutory Director of Adults Services and Statutory Director of Children's Services for the North Unitary Authority;

Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, Statutory Director of Adults Services and Statutory Director of Children's Services for the West Unitary Authority

10 posts in total.

These are attractive new opportunities that will be involved in the creation of two new unitary councils. The successful candidates will lead our workforce through a challenging period and will improve how we deliver our services to the citizens of Northamptonshire.

The roles will have flexibility to shape the new authorities and how we ensure that we retain and recruit the talent that each authority needs to succeed in the future.

The selection will involve a number of key stakeholders, including members and unitary programme leaders. The appointments will be made by the Shadow Authorities; in accordance with the agreed constitution.

Specification Requirement – what services we require for this appointment?

The service is to be provided in the context of current employment legislation and in the context of the relevant Council's Constitution. The service requirement is for the following components:

Initial exploratory and briefing meeting(s)
Market research and evidence-based advice on salary packages with reference to the unitary status / size of organisation
Attraction strategy proposals including the extent of search (local, regional, national, functional and sector-based and how diversity is addressed); including Developing concept for advert (wording to be provided) Recommendations on which publications to use and associated costs Launch national advertising campaign Executive Search - including sourcing, desk research, direct headhunting
Response handling - Evaluation of applications and sift of all candidates
Compilation and production of candidate information pack, drawing on recent recruitment and other material which is readily available, tailored and enhanced to tell a compelling story. Provision of tailored briefing for Members of the Appointment Panel with recommendations. Attend longlisting meeting
Technical interviews/assessment of agreed longlist candidates to determine recommendations for shortlisting
Compilation and production of longlist candidate information pack and tailored briefing for Members of the Appointment Panel. To include provision of recommended shortlist following interview/assessment supported by easily assimilated reports and practical advice to the panel on candidate strengths and weaknesses
Tailored candidate assessment processes (shortlisted candidates only) that identify an individual's ability against the role specification.
Professional support and presence throughout the final stage assessment and elected Member Appointment Panel interviews, with reference to the outcomes of all completed assessment activities and the relevant due diligence
Administration to shortlisted candidates to invite to interview.
Management of all candidates, including timely feedback at all stages of the process to unsuccessful candidates and preferred candidates.
Contact details of three relevant referees to be approached prior to award of contract who can substantiate the provider's performance, specifically that of the designated lead consultant for this contract, in the delivery of similar services within the last three years.

High Level Timetable for Recruitment:

Action	Date
Procure Search and Select Agency for both authorities	Jan 2020
Launch National Recruitment Campaign after Structural Order has been agreed.	Feb 2020
Executive screening process	Mar 2020
Technical Interviews	April 2020
Longlisting/Shortlisting Head of Paid Service	May 2020
Interviews for Head of Paid Service	May/Jun 2020
Appointment of Head of Paid Service	May/Jun 2020
Longlisting/Shortlisting for other Statutory Roles	May/Jun 2020
Interviews for other Statutory Roles	Jun/July 2020
Appointment of other Statutory Roles	Jun/July 2020