

Supplementary Papers



Listening Learning Leading

Contact Officer: Steven Corrigan, Democratic Services Manager
Tel: 07717 274704

FOR THE MEETING OF

Joint Staff Committee

To be held in Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton,
OX14 4SB

on Wednesday 9 June 2021 at 11.00 am

The report marked 'to follow' on the agenda is attached.

8. Interviews for head of legal and democratic and monitoring officer post
(Pages 2 - 10)

To conduct interviews and make an appointment to the head of legal and democratic and monitoring officer post.

Joint Staff Committee



Report of Acting Deputy Chief Executive – Transformation and Operations

Author: Adrianna Partridge

Telephone: 07717 355143

E-mail: adrianna.partridge@southandvale.gov.uk

Date: 9 and 10 June 2021

Appointment of head of legal and democratic / monitoring officer

Recommendation

That the committee

- a) conducts an interview, and if appropriate, asks the Chief Executive to complete the process necessary to appoint their preferred candidate as head of legal and democratic subject, to confirmation from each Cabinet that there are no objections.
- b) if an appointment is made, recommends to each Council to appoint the head of legal and democratic as monitoring officer.

Purpose of Report

1. This report invites the Joint Staff Committee to conduct a formal interview, and if appropriate, appoint to the head of legal and democratic position. If an appointment is made, to recommend to each Council that the successful candidate be appointed the councils' monitoring officer.

Appointment process

2. On 22 April 2021, the head of legal and democratic / monitoring officer position was advertised internally and externally, with a closing date of 5pm Friday 14 May 2021.
3. The external recruitment was managed as a head-hunting exercise through GatenbySanderson, following a selection process requesting quotations from three

such agencies. The vacancy was advertised in The MJ, the Local Government Lawyer website, LinkedIn and GatenbySanderson's own website. In accordance with the agreed proposal, GatenbySanderson also targeted known candidates in the profession to either discuss the role or seek recommendations for the role.

4. On 18 May 2021, GatenbySanderson provided a long-list of 12 candidates, rated 'A' and 'B' according to the perceived fit with the candidate specification. No internal candidates applied.
5. The first stage of the selection process was an officer-led informal interview with Mark Stone (Chief Executive), Suzanne Malcolm (Acting Deputy Chief Executive – Place), Adrianna Partridge (Acting Deputy Chief Executive – Transformation and Operations) and David Fairall (Strategic HR Manager). This panel selected all 8 'A'-rated candidates for first interview. One candidate withdrew before the informal interview for personal reasons.
6. Following these interviews, four candidates have been invited for a second, formal interview.
7. The Joint Staff Committee is asked to conduct these interviews with the invited candidates, and if appropriate, to appoint to the position.
8. As required by the councils' officer employment procedure rules and the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, all members of the cabinets will be informed of the decision to appoint and given an opportunity to raise any objections. If there are no material or well-founded objections by cabinet members to the proposed appointment, the appointment will be made and the recommendation to appoint the successful candidate as the councils' monitoring officer will be submitted to Vale Council meeting on 14 July 2021 and South Council meeting on 15 July 2021.
9. The agreed head of legal and democratic / monitoring officer job description is attached as *appendix 1* and the candidate applications attached as confidential *appendix 2*. Possible interview questions that committee members may wish to use will be made available prior to the interview, although committee members may decide to use other questions.

Financial implications

10. The successful candidate will be appointed on the same budgeted salary as all heads of service, which is £100,281 per annum. Half of the employee costs will be met by South Oxfordshire District Council and half the costs will be met by Vale of White Horse District Council in accordance with the existing Section 113 agreement between the two councils.

Legal implications

11. Designating the head of legal and democratic as the councils' monitoring officer will fulfil the councils' duty under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
12. Informing all members of the cabinets of the recommendations and giving them an opportunity to raise any objections will meet the requirements of the councils'

officer employment procedure rules and the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001.

Conclusion

13. The committee is invited to conduct formal interviews, and, if appropriate, select a preferred candidate for appointment as head of legal and democratic and to recommend each Council on the appointment of that individual as monitoring officer.

Job description

Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal & Democratic

Line manager's job title	Chief Executive
Grade / Salary	Spot Grade, £100,281
Duration of role	Permanent
Hours per week	37 hours per week or as required
Location	Milton Park, Oxfordshire
Employing council	South Oxfordshire
Probationary period	Six months
Notice period	Three months
DBS check required	No
Date job description updated	March 2021

About the role and what we're looking for

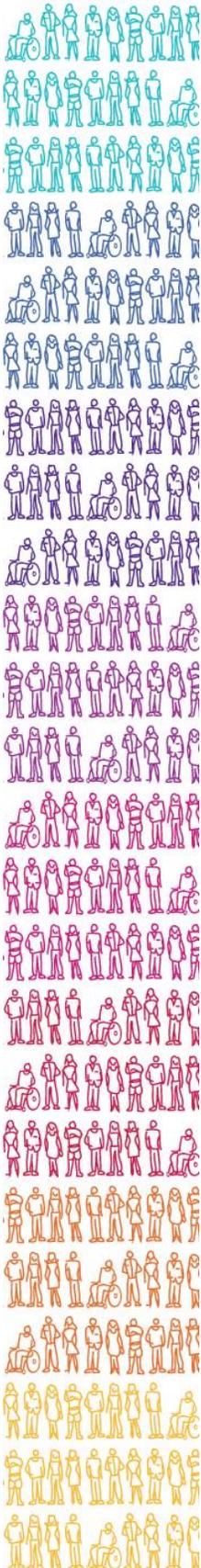
Job purpose:

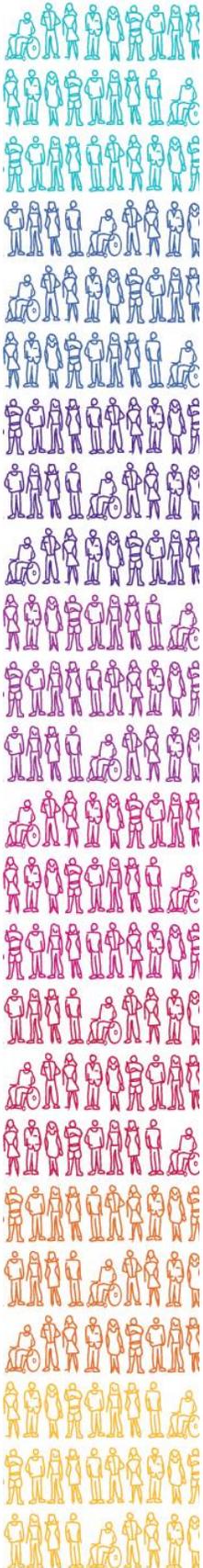
- subject to full council approval, to fulfil the statutory function of monitoring officer for both councils
- to ensure that the strategic objectives of each council are met and that all residents receive services which provide service improvement and value for money through the delivery of direct and commissioned services
- to provide effective leadership and development for the service areas within your scope, ensuring the necessary changes to culture and practice, to take forward the joint working arrangements of the councils
- as the principal advisor to both councils on the service areas within your scope, to facilitate informed decision making by ensuring that officers and members are appraised of issues and receive relevant, best-practice professional advice
- to assist the chief executive in the strategic management of the service areas within your scope

Main duties and responsibilities:

Corporate management

To assist the chief executive in providing strong and effective corporate management of both councils through:



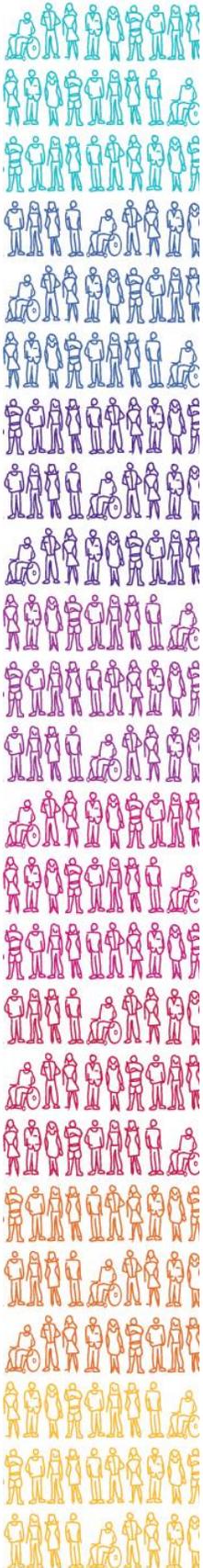


- working closely with corporate management to help create and embed the necessary changes in culture and practice to meet the needs of both councils
- to interact with portfolio members and provide regular reports and briefings to Cabinet and lead opposition members.
- contribute to the achievement of both councils' overall objectives by aligning the service to its vision and priorities, working with colleagues across both councils to effectively and efficiently deliver joined-up programmes, projects, policies and initiatives, optimising the effective and efficient use and deployment of resources
- to establish and maintain effective working relationships with all elected members as appropriate
- to build effective working relationships with internal and external partners, stakeholders and communities of interest in order to develop and improve services
- to promote a positive image of both councils externally and represent the councils in discussions with partner organisations and stakeholders

Service management

To ensure sound and robust management of the service through:

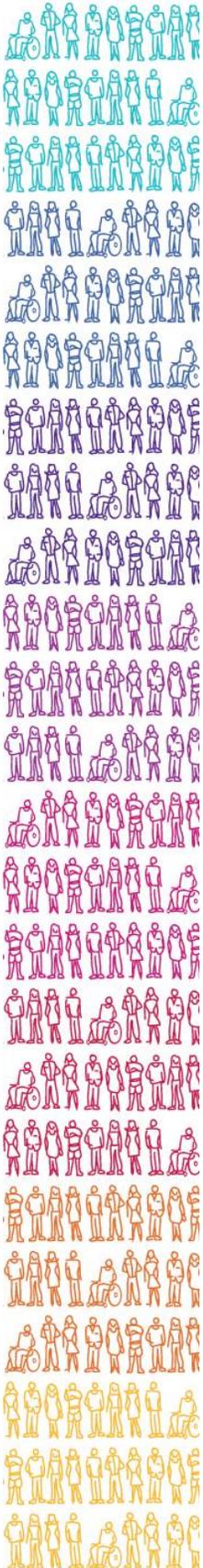
- the development, delivery and monitoring of an annual service and business plan which aligns with both councils' corporate plans, objectives and priorities. Plans to be delivered within timeframes agreed by the strategic management team and members, sufficient to inform the councils budgetary processes
- leading, motivating and developing the teams within your scope, both individually and collectively, ensuring that the employees of each council are aware of the aims and objectives of their council, the standards of behaviour and performance expected of them and the achievements of the separate organisations
- leading and managing the services within your scope, delivering excellence across the service through the development of high performing teams, effective delegation, communication, cross-authority working, prioritising customer service and satisfaction across all areas
- leadership and innovation in the development of new approaches to service delivery to ensure continuous improvement in performance, value for money, and quality of services for customers



- ensuring performance management is embedded into the day to day work of the services within your scope. Performance reviews to be undertaken by the due dates and recorded as required by the review processes. Also, ensure all service plan and workplan monitoring is undertaken by the due dates and entered onto the performance management system(s)
- identifying training and development needs in discussion with service managers for all staff in the services within your scope; and to encourage participation in any training and development activities. This to include coaching, mentoring and evaluation of all training undertaken
- to plan, monitor and manage the service's budget to achieve financial and performance targets and work with corporate management to ensure budgets are aligned to both councils' corporate strategies, objectives and priorities
- to build and lead successful joint-working arrangements and partnerships with and between councils, internal and external service providers, other Councils and agencies to deliver high-quality and cost-effective, customer-focused services
- to maintain an awareness and understanding of new legislation and/or best practice, relevant to the services within your scope, interpreting the resulting implications and developing appropriate policies, procedures and practice to ensure that both councils comply with their statutory obligations as well as secure performance improvement and increased customer satisfaction
- to ensure both council's policies and procedures, particularly health and safety, equalities, customer care, emergencies, security and work standards are embedded throughout the services within your scope
- to represent both councils equally and without bias to all outside bodies
- to avoid any conflicts in connection with the policies and activities of each council which may be different as a result of being led by different political parties
- to undertake all such duties and responsibilities determined by the chief executive that is commensurate with the nature of the post

Specific job responsibilities

- subject to full council approval, to fulfil the statutory function of monitoring officer for both councils
- ensure that a high-quality legal service is provided to both councils, including legal work on contracts, property, litigation, planning and corporate matters and advice across the range of services that the councils and its partners provide

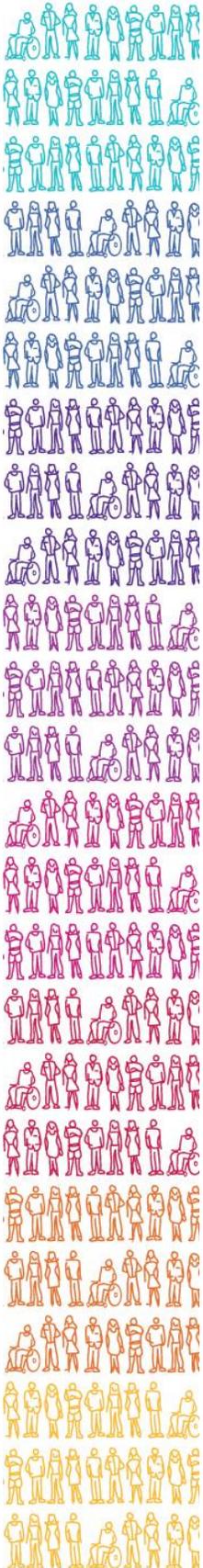


- ensure that the councils respond appropriately to changes in legislation
- review both councils' constitution and councillors' code of conduct, and make appropriate recommendations to ensure they remain effective and up to date, and that councillors and staff are fully aware of their obligations
- as required by legislation, provide advice on the councillors' code of conduct and manage the code of conduct complaints process
- ensure that high quality legal, procedural and constitutional advice is available to both councils; including the obtaining of external legal advice and opinion, where appropriate
- deliver an effective democratic administration service, ensuring councillors, committees and staff are informed, trained and guided in their roles
- deliver an effective electoral support service, ensuring both councils comply with all legislative requirements
- provide strategic management of the local land charges service delivered by the councils' contractor

About you

Experience

- relevant professional qualification as a fully qualified solicitor or equivalent
- demonstrable vocational experience and evidence of continuing professional development
- an in-depth knowledge and management experience of at least one of the significant services specified in the job description in a demanding, complex and politically sensitive environment
- a good understanding of a wide range of policy and operational issues, as well as experience of achieving significant service outcomes, in at least one of the significant services specified in the job description
- proven success in leading a large multi-disciplined team through major change, managing the integration of functions into a customer-focused service that significantly contributes to the achievement of corporate priorities
- a strong track record of achievement in developing, managing and implementing service strategies that underpin the delivery of progressively higher standards of service and cost reductions within challenging organisational circumstances
- experience of planning, monitoring and managing service budgets



- evidence of having used diversity (in its broadest sense), in a very practical way, to increase levels of organisational performance
- demonstrates a commitment to self and staff development

Key competences and behaviours

- a corporate leader who is energetic, determined and positive to enable the joint working arrangements of the councils
- the ability to provide professional advice confidently and tactfully, expressing a viewpoint and providing clear policy direction
- the ability to handle competing priorities and a challenging workload in a complex political environment
- highly developed communication, networking and ambassadorial skills
- strong personal commitment to the achievement of first-class outcomes
- an inclusive team player who can foster partnerships, work collaboratively across boundaries and achieve performance and results through others
- the ability to motivate staff at all levels to perform at the highest level possible

About us

Our vision and values are important to the councils and we expect you to support them and embed them in the way we work.



Our vision

We are seen as being customer-focussed, approachable and business-like. We are honest and open and are renowned for providing high-quality cost-effective services.

Our values

- We act with integrity and show respect
- We are all accountable
- We are passionate about our business
- We strive for simplicity
- We love success



The benefits we offer

- 33 days **annual leave** per annum, plus bank holidays and time off between Christmas and New Year
- **salary pay awards** – we review salaries each April
- a generous career average **pension** scheme which includes life insurance of three times your salary
- no car park costs as there's ample **free parking** available
- a **childcare voucher** scheme
- the opportunity to **purchase a bike** through the tax efficient Cyclescheme
- a salary sacrifice **car lease scheme** – a fully inclusive driving package for a fixed monthly cost
- various schemes to **keep you healthy** (reduced gym membership, free swims, contributory medical schemes, wellbeing appointments, free eye tests for DSE users, after work sports clubs and more)
- we give you two days per year to **volunteer** within the local community.