

Joint Staff Committee



Listening Learning Leading



Report of Acting Deputy Chief Executive – Transformation and Operations

Author: Adrianna Partridge

Telephone: 07717 355143

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

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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.