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| Report to: | COUNCIL |
| Relevant Officer: | Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships |
| Relevant Cabinet Member: | Councillor Graham Cain, Cabinet Secretary |
| Date of Meeting: | 29 March 2017 |

APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider changes to the Council's Constitution resulting from the cessation of the interim arrangements for the statutory Director of Children's Services position and the commencement of employment of the newly appointed Director of Children's Services.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To confirm the appointment of Ms Diane Booth as the Council's new statutory Director of Children's Services in accordance with Section 18 of the Children's Act 2004 with effect from 24 April 2017.
- 2.2 To note that Ms Gani Martins will cease to be Council's interim statutory Director of Children's Services in accordance with Section 18 of the Children's Act 2004 with effect from 24 April 2017.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make any further necessary arrangements to appoint or amend the appointment of an interim statutory Director of Children's Services in accordance with Section 18 of the Children's Act 2004 in the event of any unforeseen events occurring between this meeting and the 24 April 2017.
- 2.4 To request that the Director of Governance and Partnerships make all necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The Council has to consider changes to the Constitution in relation to the designated appointment for the statutory Director of Children's Services.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The proposals help the Council achieve both its priorities. 'The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool' and 'creating stronger communities and increasing resilience'.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 As members will be aware Mrs Delyth Curtis, the Council's statutory Director of Children's Services has obtained a Deputy Chief Executive position at Cheshire West and Chester Council and left the Council at the end of January 2017. A permanent replacement as Director of Children's Services, Ms Diane Booth was appointed by the Chief Officers Employment Committee on Wednesday 25 January 2017. Since she received confirmation of her successful appointment Ms Booth has been serving her contractual notice with her current employers, Lancashire County Council. Ms Booth has now indicated that she wishes her start date for her new employment to be the 24 April 2017. Therefore, the Council is accordingly recommended to confirm Ms Booth as the statutory Director of Children's Services from the intended commencement date of her employment.

5.2 In line with the statutory guidance for the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services, published by the Department of Education, which indicates that the Chief Executive can make an interim designation in such circumstances, where the Council is actively taking steps to fill a vacant post. This provision has been confirmed by the Council meeting on the 25 January 2017. The Chief Executive then made a published chief officer decision on the 1 February 2017, which confirmed the appointment of Ms Amanda Hatton and then subsequently Ms Gani Martins designated as interim statutory Directors of Children's Services in accordance with Section 18 of the Children's Act 2004.

5.3 At the point of the making of the decision the Chief Executive agreed to appoint Ms Martins to the statutory role until further notice with the intention that Ms Martins would cease her statutory role on the date that Ms Booth commenced her employment. It is therefore recommended that the Council meeting note Ms Martins' cessation of appointment of statutory Director of Children's Services on the commencement of Ms Booth's appointment. Due to the need to ensure contingency

arrangements can be accommodated, Council is also requested to delegate authority to the Chief Executive in case of any foreseen events to appoint or vary the appointment of an interim Director of Children's Services.

5.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.5 List of Appendices:

None.

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 The Children's Act 2004, states that the Council must have a Statutory Director of Children's Services designated.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 Equality considerations would be considered as part of the appointment and designation process.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 There are no other financial considerations relating to the proposals in this report.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 The appointment of Statutory Director of Children's Services means that there is an officer with the relevant knowledge, experience and skills to be accountable for the Council's duties in relation to the Children's Act 2004.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.