

Report to:	CHIEF OFFICERS EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Neil Jack
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Simon Blackburn
Date of Meeting:	4 th July 2014

CHILDREN'S AND ADULT SERVICES

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to confirm the interim arrangements that will be put in place following the resignation of the current Director of Children's Services (and statutory post holder), Sue Harrison, who has agreed to take up a similar post at another Local Authority.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To agree that on an interim basis for a period up to 30th September 2015, Delyth Curtis be designated as the statutory Director of Children's Services from a date agreed by the Chief Executive.
- 2.2 To agree that on an interim basis for a period up to 30th September 2015, Karen Smith be designated as the statutory Director of Adult Services from a date agreed by the Chief Executive and be confirmed as a Chief Officer.
- 2.3 That the statutory designations referred to in 2.1 and 2.2 above be subject to confirmation by Council at its September meeting, but the Chief Executive be authorised as indicated, to make interim designations, prior to that meeting, should the need arise.
- 2.4 To agree that the Chief Executive is authorised to make salary arrangements using the market supplement policy for both Statutory Directors within the current allocated budgets.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 Interim arrangements need to be put in place as soon as possible to stabilise the improvement journey that Children's Services have been on for the last two years

and continue the good progress that has been made.

3.2 Delyth Curtis has an excellent track record of delivering significant improvement and has excellent leadership skills with a systematic and thoughtful approach. Del also has experience of working as an Assistant Director in Children's Services in Blackpool and has excellent relationships with partners across all sectors.

3.3 Delyth would also be supported by a strong Deputy Director of Children's Services whose role is to continue to focus on the school improvement journey which would leave her able to concentrate most of her attention on the Children's Social Care agenda supported by a professional senior social care advisor and an excellent social care management team and staff.

3.4 Karen Smith is an experienced current Deputy Director of Adult Services and is well equipped to step up into the statutory Director of Adult Services role.

3.5 The designations of the statutory roles of Director of Children's Services and Director of Adult Services require Council approval. However, the national guidance for both roles allows interim designations to be made. In view of the next Council meeting being in September there maybe a need for the Chief Executive to make interim designations before that meeting which would be put forward for confirmation by Council.

3.6a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? **No**

3.6b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? **Yes**

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is "Deliver quality services through a professional, well-rewarded and motivated workforce".

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Context for the Interim Arrangements

5.2 In July 2012 Children's Social Care Services in Blackpool were deemed inadequate by OFSTED and the Council began an improvement journey led by the current Director

of Children's Services Sue Harrison.

5.3 That journey has been significant and is monitored closely by a Children's Improvement Board which is chaired by an independent person and includes the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive, the Executive Member for Children's Services, the Shadow Cabinet Member, the Chairman of the Safeguarding Board as well as a range of other council managers and key partners. Excellent progress has been made in terms of:

- Stabilising the social care management team
- Reviewing best practice
- Implementing best practice standards
- Monitoring compliance with practice standards
- Engaging the workforce
- Improved management information
- Engagement with partners
- Clarity of referral processes and
- Training and development across both the Council and partners.

5.4 In November 2013, the Council's school improvement services were inspected by OFSTED and based on GCSE results primarily were deemed inadequate. Since then an improvement plan has been submitted which is led by the Council's Deputy Director of Children's Services Carl Baker, who had only very recently been appointed to the role, to strengthen this area and significant improvements have been made in terms of

- Identification and use of challenging improvement partners
- Strengthening the existing school improvement team
- The development of new relationships in the context of the increasing numbers of academies.

5.5 Although as stated above, these areas of Council work have seen significant improvement over the last two years, the Council is aware that there must not be any time whilst permanent arrangements are put in place where that improvement journey is allowed to stall.

5.6 Interim Staffing Arrangements

5.7 For the reasons stated the Chief Executive has agreed that Delyth Curtis who is currently the Council's Director of Adult Services take on the Children's Services directorate responsibilities and recommends that she is appointed to the statutory role on an interim basis. Delyth has an excellent track record of delivering significant improvement and has excellent leadership skills with a systematic and thoughtful approach. Delyth also has experience of working as an Assistant Director in Children's Services in Blackpool and has excellent relationships with partners across all sectors

and as a result would be able to 'hit the ground running' in terms of maintaining improvement. In her current role Delyth works in partnership with the current Director of Children's Services and has responsibility for delivering to Children's Services the following functions - transitions work, early years and school funding, business intelligence, management information, children's contracting and commissioning, customer care and direct payments.

- 5.8 In her previous role as an Assistant Director in Children's Services in Blackpool, Delyth also undertook the following roles; member of the children's safeguarding board, member of the YOT board, co-chair of the complex case social care panel, commissioner for CAMHS/ psychology and LAC services, Lead for Children's Health including teenage pregnancy and sexual health, redesigned therapeutic services in special schools, integration of some children's services and health, reducing waiting times in physiotherapy and speech and language services with partners, lead on health and well being and a member of the children's trust.
- 5.9 Delyth's experience and background along with her close partnership working with our outgoing Director of Children's Services make her an excellent interim appointment who can continue the improvement journey in Children's Services and with partners. This stabilising influence will be most helpful through this interim period whilst options for the future are considered.
- 5.10 In addition the Council has already commenced dialogue with an external experienced ex Director of Children's Services about offering support to assist the transition for Delyth, where necessary and it is hoped that this arrangement will be secured. This individual comes highly recommended by the Department for Education. If it is not possible to secure her support then alternative arrangements will be made with someone of similar standing and reputation.
- 5.11 It is key that the good work and progress made in Adult Services is also protected and Karen Smith who is the acting Deputy Director of Adult Services is certainly capable of fulfilling the statutory role on an interim basis.
- 5.12 With regards to salaries the Chief Executive will instruct the Deputy Chief Executive to undertake a market review of these interim arrangements and temporary payments will be made if applicable, to Delyth Curtis and Karen Smith for the period that the interim arrangements are in place.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

List of Appendices:

None

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 As part of the restructuring arrangements legal due process for consultation on such matters with affected employees will be followed.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 Due process has been applied and the Council's Human Resources policies have been adhered to with regards to these issues. The Chief Executive has the responsibility for allocating work areas to Directors and the Council has the responsibility (via this Committee) has the responsibility for agreeing the statutory designations.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 The changes to the chief officer structure of the organisation have little impact on the workforce profile as the numbers are very small.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 These proposals will be put in place within the current budget arrangements

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 The Chief Executive is satisfied that careful consideration of risks have been undertaken and that this proposal seeks to deal with the risk of an unstable management arrangement.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 Consultation on the revised structure has been undertaken, however the Chief Executive has had to make a decision on working arrangements based on all the information in the round which ensures maximum resource is focussed on the improvement journey in the Children's and Adults Services directorates are protected.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None