

Report to:	Chief Officers Employment Committee
Relevant Officer:	Neil Jack, Chief Executive
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council
Date of Decision/ Meeting	25 January 2017

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee will be asked to consider making an appointment to the position of Director of Children's Services. Mrs Delyth Curtis has secured a position of Deputy Chief Executive (People) at Cheshire West and Chester Council and leaves the Authority at the end of the month. When her resignation was submitted the process for advertising for a replacement was started and a two day assessment process was scheduled for 24 and 25 January 2017. The process will involve various Stakeholders including Partners and a Member Panel. The Member Panel will consist of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Blackburn, Councillor Cain, Councillor Campbell and Councillor Clapham. The Panel will be asked to consider putting through a candidate(s) for final interview by the Committee.

1.2 In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Chief Officer responsible for Human Resources or their nominated representative is required to notify all members of the Executive of:

- the name of the person to whom the Committee wishes to make the offer
- any other particulars relevant to the appointment which the Committee has notified
- the period within which any objection to the making of the offer is to be made by the Executive Leader on behalf of the Executive to the Chief Officer for Human Resources.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To confirm the updated Chief Officer Structure and reporting lines with specific agreement to:

- The Director of People/ Statutory Director of Children's Services post being retitled Director of Children's Services and the job description contained within the Candidate Information Pack attached at Appendix 4(a) be agreed.

- The Deputy Director of People (Adult Services)/ Statutory Director of Adult Services being retitled Director of Adult Services and reporting to the Chief Executive.

2.2 The Committee will be requested to interview the short listed applicant for the post of Director of Children’s Services and determine whether to make an offer of appointment.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To appoint a Director of Children’s Services in accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules.

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:

To not appoint a candidate.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council priority is Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 The Chief Officer Employment Committee appointed Mrs Delyth Curtis to the position of Director of People (Statutory Director of Children’s Services) in July 2014. The remit of that post also included a reporting line to that post from the Statutory Director of Adult Services. The Statutory Director of Adult Services also has a reporting line direct to the Chief Executive, due to the statutory nature of her role. A review was undertaken when Mrs Curtis’ resignation was submitted and it was considered that this reporting line should be to the Chief Executive only and the Director of People post be retitled Director of Children’s Services, retaining the Statutory Director role for Children’s Services. This proposal will provide the new post holder with the opportunity of greater focus on the challenges within Children’s Services. An updated job description was undertaken and this is contained within the Candidate Information Pack attached at Appendix 4(a).

- 5.2 The post has been advertised in the Municipal Journal and this together with the assistance of recruitment consultants Gatenby Sanderson has resulted in a long list of seven potential candidates being drawn up for technical validation. Following this process, three candidates are being taken forward to the assessment process.
- 5.3 The Members Panel, referred to earlier in the report, helped to consider the feedback from the Stakeholder groups and also interviewed candidates and listened to presentations. Following this, the Panel will be requested to put through a preferred candidate to the Committee for final interview. Members of the Panel will update the Committee on this process prior to the final interview.
- 5.4 The Committee is also asked to note that the Deputy Director of Children's Services has secured the Director of Children's Service post at Lancashire County Council and will be leaving on the 14 February 2017. The incoming Director of Children's Services will be involved in any decisions or recruitment relating to this Deputy post and in the meantime work is underway to consider interim arrangements.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

List of Appendices

Appendix 4(a) - Candidate Information Pack.

6.0 Legal considerations:

- 6.1 The Council is to have in place a number of statutory officer positions including a Statutory Director of Children's Services (under the Children's Act 2004) and a Statutory Director of Adult Services (under the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, as amended).
- 6.2 The Director of Children's Services is responsible for the performance of Local Authority functions relating to the education and social care of children and young people. The Director is also held to account for the effective working of Children's Safeguarding Board by the Chief Executive and challenged where appropriate by the designated Lead Member.
- 6.3 Under the Council's Pay Policy Statement any position with a remuneration of over £100,000 needs Council ratification, this post was given such approval at the November 2015 Council meeting.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

- 7.1 The recruitment for this post has been undertaken in accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules.

7.2 The revised job description for the Director of Children's Services post will be subject to formal job evaluation in line with Council procedures.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 This appointment will have been undertaken in accordance with Council Policies and Procedures, which meet all equalities matters.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 The remuneration for this post is already within the agreed General Revenue budget.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 The lack of a Director of Children's Services in post is a concern in particular when dealing with Children's Social care issues. That is why when the resignation of Mrs Curtis was submitted, recruitment was commenced as soon as possible. There will however, be an interim period where a Statutory Director of Children's Services will need to be appointed. There is a report on the full Council meeting regarding interim arrangements for this.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 The Council's values of 'accountability' and 'delivering quality services' are key in regard to ensuring that the top level of the officer core is fit for purpose and accountable for their actions, in particular those with statutory responsibilities.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 Due to the partnership nature of the work of this post, a range of Stakeholders will be involved in the assessment process to help come up with a final short list.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.