

**MINUTES OF CHIEF OFFICERS EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY, 26
JANUARY 2021**

Present:

Councillors

Benson	Campbell	Taylor	T Williams
Mrs Callow JP	Clapham	L Williams	

In Attendance:

Mr Neil Jack, Chief Executive
Mrs Linda Dutton, Head of Human Resources and Workforce Development
Mr Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships
Miss Yvonne Burnett, Democratic Governance Senior Advisor

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Hobson and Galley who were engaged elsewhere on Council business.

2 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Resolved: To appoint Councillor L Williams as Chair for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2020

Resolved: That the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 20 January 2020 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

5 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/2022

Mrs Linda Dutton, Head of Human Resources and Workforce Development, explained to the Committee that the Council had an annual statutory reporting requirement to agree a pay policy statement before 31 March, which was consistent with the guidance from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The Committee was advised that the proposed statement had been considered by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) at its meeting on 16 December 2020 and would be submitted to full Council on 10 February 2021 for final approval, subject to the recommendations of this Committee.

She added that the statement was identical to that approved last year with the exception of the introduction of the Exit Cap legislation, which had been introduced in November 2020.

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Mrs Dutton explained that if an employee left local government through redundancy or other severance means it could not cost the Council more than £95,000 including any pension contribution or it would breach the legal cap.

The Committee was informed that a number of judicial reviews had been lodged and were due to be heard in March 2021, but it was unclear what impact the outcome of those reviews would have on the payment cap level.

Mrs Dutton presented the Gender Pay Gap Report 2020, which would be published on the Council's website once approved. The Committee considered the report, in particular the Gender Pay Gap data (section 3), which was based on a snap shot as at 31 March 2020. This had identified a mean pay gap of -0.77% and a median pay gap of -5.40%, which Mrs Dutton confirmed meant that on average female employees were paid slightly more than their male counterpart. She reported that the mean and median gender gap data had been consistent over the last four reporting years.

She added that nationally, on average male employees were paid 15.5% more. The quartile pay band data presented in the report confirmed that within the workforce, of which 60% were female, there was a good range of female employees across all levels within the Council. This was believed to be due to the Council's family friendly policies, fair and transparent recruitment processes and access to learning and development opportunities.

In response to a question from Councillor Taylor, Mrs Dutton advised that the comparison was against all national employers, the information relating to other Local Authorities data would only be available once each authority had published its Gender Pay Gap Report. However, the Council had fared very well last year and a similar result was expected this year.

Mr Towers reported on a further recommendation to seek delegated authority to the Chief Executive in his role as Returning Officer to set the election fees for staff, although this would remain a published decision. He explained that normally the Election Fees would be agreed by Full Council prior to a local Election, but for purpose of the Police and Crime Commissioner and possible By Elections this would allow the Chief Executive some flexibility to vary election fees due to annual uprating and potential role variations needed at short notice. Mr Towers added that any decision regarding the Returning Officer's own fee would remain subject to Council approval.

Resolved:

1. To recommend Council to approve the proposed Pay Policy Statement as outlined in the report.
2. To recommend to Council to delegate to the Chief Executive in his role of Returning Officer, the revision of election fees to staff as set out in the report.

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6 RECRUITMENT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mr Jack presented the report to the Committee, which explained the intention in terms of the interim processes and the arrangements for an acting Director of Children's Services whilst a replacement for Mrs Booth, who had decided to retire and would leave the authority at the end of March 2021, was recruited. He added that the report also outlined the process for the recruitment of a new Director of Children's Services, which would be similar to the process adopted for Mrs Booth's appointment. Mr Jack explained that the assessment process would include screening, working with knowledgeable partners from across the LGA and partners from both the statutory and the voluntary sector on the Fylde coast. He reported that it was proposed to create a sub Group of the Committee to consider the feedback from the stakeholders groups and identify a preferred candidate(s) to the Committee for final interview.

The Committee was advised that it was proposed to recommend to Council the appointment of the current Assistant Director of Children's Services as an interim statutory Director for a period of three months. Mr Jack reported that a number of interim support mechanisms and resources had been put in place, particularly around the schools agenda.

The Chair commented that the report confirmed that a robust recruitment process was in place alongside support for the Assistant Director.

Mrs Dutton reported that a number of expressions of interest had been received and the deadline for applications was 7 February 2021.

Resolved:

1. To confirm that the Member representatives who will be asked to consider putting through a candidate/s for final interview by the Committee, as part of the assessment process would be:

- Councillor Lynn Williams
- Councillor Ivan Taylor
- Councillor Mrs Maxine Callow
- Councillor Tony Williams

2. That the Committee will then be requested to interview the short listed applicant/s for the post of Director of Children's Services and determine whether to make an offer of appointment.

3. To recommend to Council the appointment of the current Assistant Director of Children's Services as the interim statutory Director of Children's Services in accordance with Section 18 of the Children's Act 2004 and delegate to the Chief Executive the authority to assign that responsibility to the successful candidate for the permanent position should they commence employment with the Council in between ordinary Council meetings.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended 5.45pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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