

Report to:	Chief Officers Employment Committee
Relevant Officer:	Neil Jack, Chief Executive
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor L Williams, Leader of the Council
Date of Decision/ Meeting	09 March 2021

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 Diane Booth has decided to retire and leaves the Authority at the end of the month. When her retirement was announced the process for advertising for a replacement was started and the Committee met on 26 January 2021 and agreed a process for recruitment. A number of interviews and assessment activities are being held in the preceding week to this Committee and will involve various Stakeholders including children/parents, Partners and a Member Panel. As agreed at the last meeting, the Member Panel will consist of Councillor L Williams Leader of the Council/ Statutory Lead Member, Councillor Taylor, Councillor T Williams and Councillor Mrs M Callow. 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 The Committee will 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.

2.2 Subject to 2.1 above, the Committee will be asked to recommend Council to designate the appointed candidate as the statutory Director of Children's Services

with effect from their start date of employment.

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 post has been advertised as detailed at the last meeting and has resulted in a short list of four potential candidates being taken forward to the assessment process.

5.2 The Members’ Panel, referred to earlier in the report, will help to consider the feedback from the Stakeholder groups and will have also interviewed candidates and listened to presentations. Following this, the Panel will be requested to put through a preferred candidate/s to the Committee for final interview. Members of the Panel will update the Committee on this process on the preceding item to this on the agenda.

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).

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.

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 retirement of Mrs Booth was announced then interim arrangements were agreed by the Council on 10 February and recruitment was commenced as soon as possible. Should the appointed candidate commence employment before the next Council meeting then Council has given the Chief Executive authority to temporarily designate them as a statutory Director of Children's Services.

11.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

11.1 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 recommendation.

12.0 Background papers:

12.1 None.