

# CHESHIRE EAST

## SHADOW COUNCIL

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**Date of meeting:** 9 December 2008  
**Report of:** Jan Burns, LGR Lead Officer  
**Title:** APPOINTMENT OF BOROUGH SOLICITOR AND  
MONITORING OFFICER

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### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To outline the process used for the recruitment of the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer and request that the Council ratify the recommendation for appointment made by the Staffing Committee.

### **2.0 Decision Required**

- 2.1 To ratify the recommendation of the Staffing Committee that Mr Christopher Chapman be confirmed as the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer of Cheshire East Council with effect from a date to be arranged.

### **3.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs**

- 3.1 Because it is anticipated that the new Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer will commence employment with the Council prior to April 2009, their salary and associated costs will form part of the transition costs. Cabinet has agreed transitional costs of up to £450,000 to pay senior management salaries during 2008-09 and based on the current recruitment timetable this should be sufficient to cover estimated costs prior to vesting day.

### **4.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond**

- 4.1 Ongoing salary and associated costs will need to be factored into the authority's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The recruitment process and appointment complies with the Staffing Regulations for the appointment of the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer.

### **6.0 Risk Assessment**

- 6.1 The appointment of the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer is a key milestone and is a major step towards the formation of the new Council, and will help to minimise the risk of failure to deliver services on Day 1 and transitional change.

## **7.0 Background and Options**

- 7.1 The recruitment process for the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer has been managed by the Staffing Committee.
- 7.2 After internal and external advertisement, the Council received 23 applications. In accordance with a decision by the Staffing Committee these applications were sifted by the nominated Recruitment Consultants, (Gatenby Sanderson), and long listed candidates were subject to an assessment process involving a technical interview, a strategic analysis exercise, ability tests and personality profiling.
- 7.3 The results of the assessment centre for the long listed candidates together with the full details of all applicants were considered by the Staffing Committee and a decision was taken to short list 4 candidates for the final selection process which took place on 8 December 2008.
- 7.4 The final selection process involved a presentation and formal interview with the Staffing Committee.
- 7.5 The Staffing Committee has now completed its deliberations and recommends to the full Council that Mr Christopher Chapman be offered the post of Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer.
- 7.6 Christopher began his career as a Partner in a private practice, before moving into local government in 1990, starting as Assistant Borough Solicitor at Darlington. In 1993, he moved to Hull City Council as Chief Solicitor where he was also clerk to the Port Health Authority. He became Borough Solicitor at Stevenage in 1995 and moved to Chiltern District Council in 1998 as Legal Manager, where he secured pilot status for the Chiltern Community Legal Service project with the Legal Aid Board and led the project board. In 2000, he was appointed as Director of Central Services at Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council where he acted as Monitoring Officer.
- 7.7 He has worked in his current role as Head of Legal and Member Services at Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council since July 2003 and is responsible for legal, land charges, licensing, elections, and Member services. He is also the Monitoring Officer.

## **8.0 Overview of Day One, Year One and Term One Issues**

- 8.1 The appointment of the Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer will help deliver the Day One, Year One and Term One priorities.

## **9.0 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 9.1 To enable the appointment of Mr Christopher Chapman to the post of Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer.

***For further information:***

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***Background Documents:***

*Documents are available for inspection at County Hall, Chester – contact Jan Burns.*