

**OPEN - Report**

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION - Appendices 1 and 2**

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 and 2 of Part 1 Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

**Appointments Committee**

**25 March 2025**

**Recruitment and Selection for post of Executive Director Children's Services**

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**Report of: Rob Polkinghorne, Chief Executive**

**Report Reference No: AP/11/24-25**

**Ward(s) Affected: All**

**Purpose of Report**

- 1 To update on the recruitment and selection arrangements for the post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS).
- 2 To select the successful candidate for appointment to the post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS).
- 3 The report contributes to the delivery of Council services through the recruitment to a key vacant senior management post.

**Executive Summary**

- 4 The report provides an update on the current recruitment and selection process for the post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS).
- 5 The post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS) was advertised with a closing date of 16 February 2025.
- 6 There were 7 applications received for the post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS).
- 7 On 24 February 2025, the Appointments Committee approved a longlist of 6 candidates to progress to the assessment of technical ability and potential suitability.
- 8 On 19 March 2025, having carefully considered the feedback from the assessment of technical ability and potential suitability, the Appointments Committee approved a shortlist of candidates to progress to the assessment

centre and formal interview. The number of shortlisted candidates was not available at the date of publication of this report.

- 9 The Appointments Committee is requested to formally interview the shortlisted candidates for the post as well as consider the feedback on these candidates from the panels for the assessment centre as part of the recruitment and selection process to select the successful candidate for appointment to the post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS).

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Appointments Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the update on the recruitment and selection process.
2. Select the successful candidate from the shortlist of applicants for appointment to the post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS).
3. Notify the Director of People of the name of the successful candidate and of the salary and any other relevant particulars to make the job offer within the terms of the Council's approved Pay Policy Statement.

#### Background

- 10 On 19 March 2025, the Appointments Committee approved a shortlist of candidates to progress to the assessment centre and for formal interview.
- 11 Appendix 1 provides the CVs and supporting statements for shortlisted candidates together with a report on the technical assessments.
- 12 Appendix 2 provides the detail of the assessment centre and formal interview week for the post.
- 13 Appendices 1 and 2 are Part 2 and are exempt from publication in accordance with Chapter 3, Part 2, Paragraph 24 under the categories 'Information relating to any individual' and 'Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual'. The public in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information as this
- maintains the council's confidential recruitment process to ensure that it can recruit the best candidate for the role, and
  - ensures the candidates' personal data is protected and there is no breach of data protection, and
  - does not undermine the recruitment process.

- 14 The Appointments Committee is requested to:
- carefully consider the feedback from the panels of the assessment centre and the Appointments Committee's deliberations following the formal interview with reference to the job description and person specification for the post, and
  - select the successful candidate from the shortlist of applicants for appointment to the post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS).
- 15 to notify the Director of People of the name of the successful candidate and of the salary and any other relevant particulars to make the job offer within the terms of the Council's approved Pay Policy Statement.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

- 16 Not applicable.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 17 In accordance with the Constitution, the Appointments Committee is required to:
- undertake the recruitment and selection process for the post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS) in accordance with the Employment Procedure Rules, and
  - notify the Director of People of the name of the proposed candidate and of the salary and any other relevant particulars to make the job offer within the terms of the Council's approved Pay Policy Statement.

### **Other Options Considered**

- 18 Not applicable.

### **Implications and Comments**

#### *Monitoring Officer/Legal*

- 19 On 16 October and 11 December 2024, Full Council approved the Phase 1 senior leadership structure with the additional new posts and salaries over £100,000 in line with Cheshire East Council's constitution. The Executive Director Children's Services (DCS) was an established post in the previous structure.
- 20 In line with Cheshire East Council's constitution, the Appointments Committee is responsible for selecting the successful candidate for the post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS) as a Statutory Director.

- 21 A fair, transparent and objectively justified selection process with due regard to equality laws should be followed for this selection phase of the recruitment process to reduce the risk of potential legal challenge.
- 22 Any proposed salary or other relevant particulars of employment should comply with the Council's pay policy statement, pay framework and other relevant policies.

#### *Section 151 Officer/Finance*

- 23 The revised senior management structure was approved at full council on 16 October and 11 December 2024.
- 24 The post being referred to in this latest report will be budgeted from 1 April 2025 and included in the MTFS and budget for the 2025/26 onwards.
- 25 The Council report noted that "there is a small difference between costs of the current structure versus the final structure, reflecting small variances in grading between temporary and permanent arrangement. These costs would need to be managed by the relevant services areas as would normally be case when appointing at a spot salary". This remains the case.
- 26 The budget for further stages of the senior management restructure will need to be confirmed on a case-by-case basis.

#### *Policy*

- 27 The recruitment to the post of Executive Director Children's Services (DCS) is key to the Council's need to provide capacity and leadership within the Senior Management Team to meet the current fiscal challenges and to deliver its transformation programme.

#### *Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion*

- 28 There are no direct equality implications.
- 29 All equality considerations will be taken into account as part of the recruitment process for the Executive Director Children's Services (DCS).

#### *Human Resources*

- 30 Actions will be undertaken in accordance with the Constitution and appropriate HR policies and procedures.

#### *Rural Communities*

- 31 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

*Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)*

- 32 This is a significant appointment for positive impact of the lives and outcomes for Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

*Public Health*

- 33 There are no direct implications for public health.

*Climate Change*

- 34 There are no direct implications for climate change.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
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Appendices:	Appendix 1 Part 2 – CVs and supporting statements of shortlisted applicants (to follow)  Appendix 2 Part 2 - Schedule for assessment centre and formal interview (to follow)
Background Papers:	None