



COUNCIL - WEDNESDAY, 19 JULY 2023

Late Item(s)

11. REPORT OF THE SENIOR OFFICERS' COMMITTEE(Pages 3 - 6)

The Chair of the Senior Officers Committee to present the report of the meeting held on 11th July 2023.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Appointment of Chief Executive, Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer

Meeting/Date: Council – 19th July 2023

Executive Portfolio: Executive Leader – Councillor S J Conboy

Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

Following the appointment of an Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer on an interim basis from 1st March 2023 for a fixed term ending 31st August 2023, the Council has undertaken a recruitment exercise to appoint a permanent person to this role.

It is

RECOMMENDED

- (a) that Michelle Sacks be appointed as the Council's Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer with a start date to be confirmed following necessary employment checks which will be confirmed in consultation with Senior Officers' Committee and Group Leaders;
- (b) that an extension to the appointment of Oliver Morley as the Council's Managing Director and Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer be approved for a fixed term ending on the commencement of employment of Michelle Sacks.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Council is required to have the statutory officer of Head of Paid Service. The Council's Constitution designates this post to the role of Managing Director and this post will revert to the previous title of Chief Executive.
- 1.2 The current postholder also acts as the Electoral Registration Officer for the purposes of electoral administration arrangements and also carries the separate appointment of Returning Officer for the purpose of elections to the Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council is required to designate one of its officers as Head of Paid Service as set out in the Council's Constitution and under section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. This appointment must be made by full Council.
- 2.2 Following the resignation of the previous Managing Director that retired from the Council on 28th February 2023, the Council at their meeting on 15th December 2022 approved an Interim Managing Director appointment for a period of six months to exercise all functions currently undertaken by the previous Managing Director as set out in the Council's Constitution.
- 2.3 As this is a key appointment, the Committee has received independent support and advice from the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, who have significant experience in senior public sector appointments and in all recruitment and selection matters.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

- 3.1 The post was advertised nationally, attracting a field of 34 candidates. Following a long and short-listing exercise, technical interviews with internal and external stakeholders and an assessment centre which used a variety of methods to assess the suitability of candidates for the roles, five candidates were interviewed on 11th July 2023.
- 3.2 After careful consideration of all of the assessment information and on completion of the final interviews, the Senior Officers' Committee at their meeting on 11th July 2023 recommended that a conditional offer of appointment be made to Michelle Sacks. The Committee concluded that Michelle demonstrated the necessary vision, strategic skills and experience to meet the future needs of the Council and challenges ahead.
- 3.3 Michelle Sacks was most recently Deputy Chief Executive (Growth) at South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership and has held that role since October 2021.
- 3.4 Subject to Council agreeing the Committee's recommendations and the completion of the necessary employment checks, a start date is still to be

confirmed for Michelle Sacks but will be confirmed in consultation with Senior Officers' Committee and Group Leaders.

- 3.5 The current salary for MD Grade is included in the Council's Pay policy Statement and has a minimum point of £134,947 and maximum point of £152,172. The post was advertised with the full salary range and Michelle would be appointed on a spot salary of £134,947.
- 3.6 In accordance with the Council's Officer Employment Procedure Rules, an offer of appointment as Head of Paid Service shall not be made by the Council until details of the proposed appointment have been provided to Members of the Cabinet, who must be given a period of objection.
- 3.7 Details of the proposed appointment have been provided to Members of the Cabinet, who must be given a period of objection. Subject to confirmation by the Executive Leader that there is no objection from any Member of the Cabinet to the offer of employment at their meeting on 18th July 2023, there will be a recommendation to Council that Michelle Sacks will be appointed as Chief Executive, Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer.
- 3.8 The Senior Officers' Committee also agreed to the extension of the appointment of Oliver Morley as the Council's Interim Managing Director and Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for a fixed term ending on the commencement of employment of Michelle Sacks.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Under 4(1)(a) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, it is the duty of every relevant local authority to designate one of their officers as the Head of Paid Service.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The recommended approach can be met from existing budgets.

6. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 6.1 This proposal enables the Council to fulfil its duty to appoint an Officer to discharge the full responsibilities of the Head of Paid Service as set out in the Council's Constitution and under Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The District Council's Constitution

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