

REPORT TO: Council

DATE: 26th January 2022

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency

PORTFOLIO: Leader’s Portfolio

SUBJECT: Recommendation of the Appointments Committee for the appointment to the post of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 Following the announcement of the Council’s incumbent Chief Executive to step down from the post on 31st March 2022, the Council advertised the Chief Executive vacancy in the open market at the end of November 2021. A full and thorough recruitment process has followed.

1.2 Within the Council’s Constitution, Appendix 4, relating to the Powers and Duties of Committee’s, it directs that the Appointments Committee is;

To deal with Appointments, Disciplinary Matters and Dismissals relating to the Head of Paid Service, Strategic Directors, Operational Directors, and the Operational Director (Legal and Democratic Services) as set out in the Officer Employment Procedure Rules and subject to the Standing Orders relating to Staff.

1.3 Within the Council’s Constitution, Section 3(a) of the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, which form a part of the Standing Orders Relating to Staff, stipulates as follows;

The full Council will appoint the Head of Paid Service on recommendation from the Council’s Appointments Committee

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

1) the report be noted; and

2) Council considers the recommendation of the Appointments Committee and appoints the proposed candidate with effect from a date to be confirmed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 For ease of reading and the avoidance of doubt, the Chief Executive of Halton Borough is the Head of Paid Service. The term 'Head of Paid Services' is used within legislation, the Council's Constitution, Employment Terms and Conditions, and sector specific publications. Where used in this report, it should be taken to mean 'Chief Executive'
- 3.2 The vacancy closed on 20th December 2021. Following a review of applications for the post, the Appointments Committee determined a long-list of applicants to be invited to a recruitment Assessment Centre on 13th & 14th January 2022.
- 3.3 The Assessment Centre was delivered by the Council's HR Service in collaboration with North West Employers, consisting of a wide range of interviews and assessment activities across the two days to test and evaluate the skills, abilities and aptitude of the candidates.
- 3.4 On 17th January 2022, the Appointments Committee considered a comprehensive report on each candidate, clearly setting out the results of the assessments undertaken, along with a range of psychometric test results.
- 3.5 Following consideration of the candidate reports, the Appointments Committee determined a short-list of applicants to be invited to interview, at a meeting of the Appointments Committee, on 24th January 2022.
- 3.6 The meeting of the Appointments Committee on 24th January is intended to thoroughly assess the short-listed candidates and determine a preferred candidate to be recommended to Council for appointment to the role.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The process outlined in section 3 above is compliant with the Council's policy pertaining to the recruitment and appointment of a Chief Executive, as set out in the Council's Constitution.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The salary of the Chief Executive post (£156,000 to £168,000) has been market tested prior to the recruitment process. This is to continue to be covered by Council revenue budget.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**

The Chief Executive has overarching responsibility for the delivery of this priority on behalf of the Council.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The Chief Executive has overarching responsibility for the delivery of this priority on behalf of the Council.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The Chief Executive has overarching responsibility for the delivery of this priority on behalf of the Council.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The Chief Executive has overarching responsibility for the delivery of this priority on behalf of the Council.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The Chief Executive has overarching responsibility for the delivery of this priority on behalf of the Council.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The Chief Executive is the principle adviser to the political leadership of the Council, its Executive, and the elected Council as a whole. In addition, the post-holder is the key link to the Combined Authority, neighbouring Councils, regional Government agencies, central Government departments and Ministers. Within the organisation the Chief Executive has authority over all other employees of the council, sets organisational policy direction, and oversees the discharging of statutory responsibilities. It is by definition a necessary position in the Council's staffing structure.

7.2 The risk attached to not appointing a new Chief Executive would place the Council in a precarious position as it would be operating day to day on temporary arrangements. This cannot be sustained for a prolonged period as it would likely create uncertainty and instability in leadership, policy direction, and the Council's position amongst its key stakeholders.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The Council's recruitment process is up to date and robust. The Chief Executive recruitment process has been a tailored variation of the Council's established recruitment procedure. That procedure has been subject to Equality Impact Assessment.

- 8.2 In attracting a range of applicants to the opportunity when it was advertised to the market-place, no candidate was treated less favourably than any other. Any adjustments to the process were offered to all candidates.
- 8.3 If a successful candidate requires any adjustments in order to perform the duties of the role, these will be considered and applied in accordance with Council policy and prevailing legislation.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act.