

# COUNCIL

## Appointment of Shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

21 February 2011

### Joint Report of Joint Personnel Committee and Monitoring Officers (Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council)

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Council's approval of the recommendations of the Joint Personnel Committee that Sue Smith be appointed to the Post of Shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service with effect from a date to be agreed in May with the new post holder by the Head of People and Improvement (Cherwell District Council) and the Head of Corporate Services (South Northamptonshire Council) in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Personnel Committee.

This report is public

#### Recommendations

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Council is recommended to:

- (1) Agree the recommendation of the Joint Personnel Committee that Sue Smith be appointed Shared Chief Executive from a date to be agreed in May 2011 with the new post holder by the Head of People and Improvement (Cherwell District Council) and the Head of Corporate Services (South Northamptonshire Council) in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Personnel Committee.
- (2) Agree the recommendation of the Joint Personnel Committee that Sue Smith be appointed the Council's Head of Paid Service for the purposes of Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 with effect from a date to be agreed in May with the new post holder by the Head of People and Improvement (Cherwell District Council) and the Head of Corporate Services (South Northamptonshire Council) in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Personnel Committee.
- (3) Agree that the term of appointment of Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid service end on the date on which the new permanent Shared Chief Executive takes up her post.

## Executive Summary

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- 1.1 Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires every relevant authority to 'designate' one of their officers as Head of Paid Service. The Council's constitution designates this post holder as Chief Executive. In accordance with the shared management business case agreed by Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council it was agreed that following open recruitment a post of Shared Chief Executive should be created to serve both authorities.
- 1.2 Since 1 January 2011 the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service roles have been occupied by Ian Davies on an interim basis pending recruitment of a Shared Chief Executive between Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council. This followed the previous Chief Executive Mary Harpley being appointed Chief Executive at the London Borough of Hounslow.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 9 December 2010, the Joint Personnel Committee considered and agreed the recruitment arrangements. It was agreed that the post should be advertised in the Sunday Times and a recruitment microsite created.
- 1.4 On 20 January 2011 the Joint Personnel Committee considered the 37 applications which had been received and decided to short list 13 candidates for interview by Veredus. The Committee met again on 9 February 2011 to consider the Veredus analysis of long listed candidates. Based on this assessment the Committee agreed that 4 candidates should proceed to the assessment centre and interview stage.
- 1.5 On 16 February 2011 shortlisted candidates attended an assessment centre at South Northamptonshire Council (consisting of psychometric profiling, media assessment, mock Cabinet/ Executive meeting and stake holder discussions), followed by an evening event at Cherwell District Council which all councillors were invited to attend. The Committee then held interviews on 17 February at Cherwell District Council. The recruitment process was carried out by Veredus on behalf of both councils.
- 1.6 The Committee selected Sue Smith as the preferred candidate. Sue is currently the Chief Executive of Harborough District Council, a post she has held since her appointment in 2005.

In a local government career spanning 30 years, Sue has held key posts as:

- Deputy Chief Executive, Lichfield District Council 2002 – 2005
  - Corporate Director, Communications, Culture, Community, Regeneration and Partnerships, Lichfield District Council 2001 – 2002
  - Head of Leisure Services, Lichfield District Council 1995 - 2001
- 1.7 It should be noted that to take effect this decision also requires the agreement of South Northamptonshire Council which is due to meet on 24 February 2011.

## **Compliance with Officer Employment Procedure Rules**

1.8 It is a requirement of the South Northamptonshire constitution that the Monitoring Officer, reports confirming compliance with the following principles of the Officer Employment Procedure Rules:

The Council will:-

- draw up a statement specifying the duties of the officer concerned and any qualifications or qualities to be sought in the person to be appointed and make arrangements for a copy of the statement to be sent to any person on request; and
- make arrangements for the post to be advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it;
- interview all applicants (or, if appropriate, shortlist for interview) via the appropriate Committee (in this case the Joint Personnel Committee).

1.9 The Council's recruitment consultants have made the following information available to the Monitoring Officers:-

- a full job outline, listing principal duties and accountabilities, and a detailed person specification were drawn up as part of a briefing pack;
- that the vacant post was advertised in the Sunday Times which is an appropriate professional publication to ensure that suitably qualified persons would see it;
- that all persons accessing the consultants' web site as directed in the advertisement were able to download the briefing pack which advised them to submit their CV and a supporting statement by email if they wished to apply for the vacancy; and
- that there were no known problems with the consultants' web site that would have made the details inaccessible during the relevant period.

The Monitoring Officer can therefore confirm compliance with the constitutional requirements.

## **Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options**

3.1 The designation of a Head of Paid Service is a statutory requirement.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

**Option One**                      Appoint Sue Smith as Shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

**Option Two**                      Not to appoint Sue Smith as Shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and to make an alternative recommendation

## Consultations

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**Executive and Cabinet Members** It is a legislative requirement that the proper officer has been notified by the appointer of the name of the proposed appointee and any other particulars relevant to the appointment.

In accordance with this requirement, the proper officers of both authorities were notified on Thursday 17 February 2011 and have in turn notified every Cabinet/Executive Member of the above, informing them of the 3 day period within which any objection to the proposed appointment can be made by the Leader of the Council on behalf of the Cabinet/Executive.

The proper officer has confirmed that no such objections have been made within the stated period.

## Implications

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**Financial:** The costs of employing a Shared Chief Executive have been included in the business case. The costs have also been built into the 2011/12 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Comments checked by Martin Henry, Section 151 and Chief Finance Officer, 01295 221559.

**Legal:** The Council is required to have a designated Head of Paid Service under the Local Government Act 1972 who must be "suitably qualified". The proposed arrangements ensure the Council is complying with legislation.

Comments checked by:

Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Council Monitoring Officer, 01295 221688

Kevin Lane, Head of Corporate Services and Monitoring Officer, 01327 322127

**Risk Management:** The designation of a Head of Paid Service is a statutory requirement.

Comments checked by:

Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Council Monitoring Officer, 01295 221688

Kevin Lane, Head of Corporate Services and Monitoring Officer, 01327 322127

## Wards Affected

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All

## Document Information

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Appendix No	Title
	None
Background Papers	
None	
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