
REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM:
DATE OF MEETING:	22nd JULY 2004	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	IAN REID (EXT 5790) MARK ALFLAT (EXT 5712)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	RECRUITMENT OF HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	REF: s/pers/reports
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM05

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the appointment into the post is delegated to a panel of Members from this Committee in accordance with the Senior Offices Appointments procedure approved by Council on 1st July 2004.
- 1.2 That the recruitment into the post should continue, with a formal offer of appointment being subject to final approval on the restructuring Council being approved at Council on 12th August 2004.
- 1.3 That the maximum number of Members on the Panel should be 5 although a smaller number could be used if approved by this Committee and the appropriate political representation is maintained.

2.0 Reason for Urgency

- 2.1 To ensure compliance with the adopted practice of the Council for the appointment of Senior Officers.

3.0 Purpose of Report

- 3.1 To seek approval for the recruitment into the post of Head of Environmental Services that is a critical senior post within the proposed structure of the Council.

4.0 Detail

- 4.1 At its meeting on 1st July 2004, the Council adopted a procedure that should be followed for the appointment of Senior Officers. This requires this committee to delegate authority for appointment into the post to a panel of Members.

- 4.2 This Panel would then agree the recruitment process and make the appointment with the advice and support of Officers. It is noted that the final decision on the appointment would be subject to their being no objections being raised by any Member of this Committee.
- 4.3 Due to the length of time this post has been vacant, Council agreed that the recruitment exercise should commence at the earliest opportunity. This has been done and in total 21 applications received.
- 4.4 To move the appointment forward, a meeting of Members nominated from this Committee was held on Wednesday 21st July 2004. Due to other commitments only 3 Members could attend this meeting and Officers presented their assessment of the applications and the proposed method of selection.
- 4.5 Before confirming any details the following issues were raised;
- Could the recruitment continue if the restructuring had not been approved and in effect the post had not be established?
 - The procedure allows for 5 Members to undertake the recruitment and would this create any issues and;
 - Could other Members be included if they had not been included with agreeing the shortlist or selection methods?

5.0 Options

5.1 Appointment

- 5.2 Clearly if the post does not exist on the Council establishment, it would not be possible for any appointment to be confirmed. It is therefore recommended that any formal offer be made subject to the final determination on the report being considered by Full Council on 12th August 2004.
- 5.3 A further option could be that the appointment into this post is permitted, ahead of this approval, albeit this could create further issues if any further parts of the proposals are not accepted.

5.4 Panel

- 5.5 It is best practice that any people involved with the recruitment of staff are involved throughout the process. Subsequently, this would preclude any other Members being appointed onto the Panel. As the procedure states that the Panel consists of 5 Members, the current process clearly will not comply.
- 5.6 It would be possible, subject to the approval of this Committee to continue with 3 members as those involved to date provide the appropriate political balance.
- 5.7 Alternatively, a similar meeting with 2 other Members could be held to discuss the recruitment and if accepted, they could then be present at the formal interview. This would ensure consistency and transparency throughout the process. However, if any issues were raised these would need to be discussed with the other Members of the Panel before any recruitment is commenced.

5.8 Current position

5.9 As noted above 21 candidates have applied for the post. It is important to move the recruitment forward to ensure that an appointment is made at the earliest opportunity. If the process is delayed, some of the candidates may withdraw their application thus reducing the number and possibly the quality of the people interested in the post. It would also create a negative impression of the Council as an employer.

5.10 However, it is important to follow the correct procedure and genuine candidates would be prepared to accept a slight delay with good reason. This needs to be considered in the context of maintaining and delivering the services that would come under the postholder responsibility.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 None directly arising from this report.

7.0 Corporate Implications

7.1 Adherence to the Council's adopted practice is required to avoid any risks arising from the recruitment process.

8.0 Community Implications

8.1 This post is critical for the delivery of an effective service for the community. An early appointment will enable the services that are the direct responsibility of the post holder to be developed and improved.

9.0 Background Papers

9.1 Senior Officer appointment procedure approved by Council on 1st July 2004.

