

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SHADOW AUTHORITY

SHADOW AUTHORITY MEETING

Tuesday 15th September 2020

Report of the Interim Head of Paid Service

Report Title	Appointment of the Statutory Officers and other Senior Officers for the new Senior Leadership Team of West Northamptonshire Council
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend to the Shadow Authority the permanent appointment of the Senior and Statutory Officer roles for the new leadership team for the West Northamptonshire Council.
- 1.2 The report also recommends the designation of the interim Monitoring Officer for the Shadow West Northamptonshire Council.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the following be confirmed as Directors and designated statutory officers for the West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority and the West Northamptonshire Council:
 - Martin Henry as Director of Finance and Statutory Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer); to be appointed to a salary of £130,000 (*within the advertised grade of £130, 000 - £140, 000*)
 - Catherine Whitehead as Director of Legal and Democratic Services and Statutory Monitoring Officer; to be appointed to a salary of £110, 000 (*within the advertised grade of £110, 000 - £115,000*)
 - Stuart Lackenby as Director of Adult Social Service and Statutory DASS officer; to be appointed to a salary of £130, 000 (*within the advertised grade of £130, 000 - £140, 000*)
 - Cathi Hadley as Shared Director of Children's Services and Statutory DCS (joint with North Northamptonshire Council); to be appointed to a salary of £150, 000 (*within the advertised grade of £145,000 - £155, 000*).

(Reason for Recommendations – The appointment of Statutory officers is for decision by the Shadow Authority. In line with government guidance and the importance of transparency and of objective justification for senior salaries the basis for the recommended salary is set out in this paper).

- 2.2 That Andrew Hunkin be confirmed as interim Monitoring Officer for the West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority with effect from 21st September 2020 until the permanent Director of Legal and Democratic Services and Statutory Monitoring Officer is confirmed and commences their appointment.

3. Report Background

- 3.1 The appointment of the senior leadership team is a significant step towards establishing the new West Northamptonshire Council. It enables Members, supported by the recently appointed permanent Chief Executive, Anna Earnshaw, to drive forward the transformation that is needed to successfully transition to the new unitary on 1st April 2021. The new Chief Executive will commence her role on 1 October 2020.
- 3.2 The Northamptonshire (Structural Changes) Order 2020 specifies that, 'each shadow authority must before 31st December 2020 appoint a person to become, on and after that date: i) the Council's monitoring officer; ii) the council's Chief Finance Officer; and iii) the council's Head of Paid Service'.
- 3.3 Prior to the formation of the West Shadow Senior Appointments Committee and the Senior Appointments Task and Finish group in June 2020, Council Leaders agreed that these three statutory roles, along with some further leadership roles in Adults and Children's social care should be recruited to the West Northamptonshire Council:
- Chief Executive; incorporating Head of Paid Service statutory designation;
 - Director of Finance; incorporating Chief Finance Officer / S151(CFO) statutory designation;
 - Director of Legal and Democratic Services; incorporating the Monitoring Officer statutory designation;
 - Director of Adult Social Service; incorporating the DASS statutory designation;
 - A shared Director of Children's Services; incorporating the DCS statutory designation to sit across both unitary authorities; with oversight of the Children's Trust.
- 3.4 To attract the most suitable candidates and ensure compliance with the Structural Changes Order (2020) in appointing the three statutory posts before 31st December 2020, leaders agreed to launch a national recruitment campaign in May 2020.
- 3.5 After a procurement exercise, which resulted in Penna being selected as the preferred external executive search and recruiting partner, this campaign was developed by Leaders in conjunction with the Future Northants HR Programme and Penna and resulted in a national advertisement campaign "Shaping Our future" being launched in the Municipal Journal and online throughout the months of May and June. The Shadow Leader, Cllr McCord, also positively encouraged internal employees to apply.
- 3.6 A benchmarking exercise was undertaken to agree salary ranges for these senior roles, based on roles in comparable Unitary councils, both in terms of the size and complexity of services delivered.
- 3.7 The Shadow Senior Appointments Committee and Task and Finish group was established following the first Shadow Council meeting on 2nd June 2020. The selection strategy and appointment process was developed in the Task and Finish Group meetings during June. The Shadow Senior Appointments Committee agreed a series of recommendations from the Task & Finish Group at its meeting on 7th July 2020.

- 3.8 A transparent and holistic selection approach was agreed; with the aim of involving as many Councillors and stakeholders as possible in these key appointments. To enable this wider involvement of councillors in the decision making, the Senior Appointments Committee on 7th July 2020, established a main appointment Sub-Committee as provided for in the West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority Constitution, and hereafter referred to as the interview panel with member panels to advise it, together with the partner panels, which also contained relevant stakeholders. The interview panels conducted the interviews in confidence during the 1st week of September.

The interview and other panels were each led by a member of the Shadow Executive and included over 43 different members from across the Shadow Council. These Members took part in main panel and member stakeholder panel engagement. We were also very grateful for the positive involvement of stakeholders from our partners in Health, Police and the voluntary sector. Their valuable involvement and feedback gave the interview panels a different perspective on candidates and allowed the selection to take into account feedback on each candidate's approach to working with partners.

Our new Chief Executive, Anna Earnshaw, was also able to take part in the interviews as a senior adviser to the main panels; supporting the shaping of West Northamptonshire's new leadership team.

- 3.9 The appointment panels received a briefing and training on recruitment and selection prior to the interviews by the Local Government Association during July and August 2020.
- 3.10 Due to the complex and thorough procedure undertaken by the interview panels, the time it took to source, interview and finalise negotiations with candidates, (especially against the backdrop of Covid-19 restrictions and the summer holiday period), it was not possible to convene a further meeting of the Senior Appointments Committee in time to make the decision about which Candidates to recommend to Full Council at this meeting. The decision could not be delayed until the next Full Council meeting, which is in February, as that would not have met the deadline of 31st December 2020 imposed by the Northamptonshire (Structural Changes Order) 2020.
- 3.11 The Interim Head of Paid Service has therefore used the authority granted to him in Part 4D Meeting Procedure Rules Paragraph 19 of the Constitution to take the urgent decision on behalf of the Senior Appointments Committee. This decision was to receive the outcomes and recommendations of the interview panels and recommend to Full Council the appointments contained in Paragraph 4 of this report. The designation set out in Paragraph 6 of the report is recommended directly by the Head of Paid Service under delegated authority.

4. Leadership Appointments – Panels and Recommended Appointments

4.1 Recommended Appointment of Director of Finance (CFO/ S151)

The main appointment panel was chaired by Cllr McCord; who was joined by Cllr Longley, Cllr Breese, Cllr Eldred, Cllr Randall and Cllr Harris.

The appointment panel received a total of 14 applications for this recruitment campaign and longlisted 8 candidates to undertake the technical assessment process. 4 candidates were shortlisted and interviewed on Tuesday 1st September 2020.

The conclusion of the main appointment panel is to recommend the appointment of Martin Henry as West Northamptonshire's permanent Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer. Martin is currently the interim Section 151 Officer for West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority and also the Executive Director of Finance and Property at South Northamptonshire Council. He has worked in and with local government and the wider public sector for almost 30 years and has spent nearly 15 years of that period as a Chief Financial Officer. Martin has extensive experience of operational financial management; as well as delivering a range of successful corporate strategies and procedures.

4.2 Recommended Appointment of Director of Legal and Democratic Services (MO)

The main appointment panel was chaired by Cllr Nunn; who was joined by Cllr Brown, Cllr Shephard, Cllr Rawlinson, Cllr Ashraf and Cllr Lofts.

The appointment panel received a total of 7 applications from this recruitment campaign and longlisted 5 candidates to undertake the technical the assessment process. 2 candidates were shortlisted and interviewed on Wednesday 2nd September 2020.

The conclusion of the main appointment panel is to recommend the appointment of Catherine Whitehead as West Northamptonshire's permanent Director of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer. Catherine is currently the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy/ Monitoring Officer for Wycombe District Council (now Buckinghamshire Council). She is a highly experienced lawyer who has operated at senior board level for over 15 years. She has successfully advised and delivered on unitary transition and transformation.

4.3 Recommended Appointment of Director of Adult Social Services (DASS)

The main appointment panel was chaired by Cllr Auger; who was joined by Cllr Herring, Cllr Stone, Cllr Beardsworth, and Cllr Bowen.

The appointment panel received a total of 16 applications from this recruitment campaign and longlisted 10 candidates to undertake the technical the assessment process. 4 candidates were shortlisted and interviewed on Thursday 3rd September 2020.

The conclusion of the main appointment panel is to recommend the appointment of Stuart Lackenby as West Northamptonshire's permanent Director of Adult Services (DASS). Stuart is currently the Director of Adult Social Care for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. He is a registered social worker and has worked in Adult Social care for over 22 years; operating at a senior level for the past 5 years. He brings considerable experience of strategic leadership planning and successful implementation of change and transformation.

4.4 Recommended Joint Appointment of Director of Children's Services (DCS)

This role has been agreed by West and North Northamptonshire Councils as a joint role and a joint appointment. The agreed employer for this shared role is North Northamptonshire Council from 1st April 2021.

The joint appointment panel comprised:

Cllr Golby, Cllr Baker and Cllr Birch for the West Shadow Authority; and

Cllr Brackenbury (Wendy), Cllr Edwards and Cllr McGhee for the North Shadow Authority.

The appointment panel received a total of 5 applications from this recruitment campaign and longlisted 2 candidates to undertake the technical assessment process. 1 candidate was shortlisted and interviewed on Tuesday 8th September 2020.

The conclusion of the joint appointment panel is to recommend the appointment of Cathi Hadley as the shared Director of Children's Services for the West and North Northamptonshire Councils; and the shared DCS Statutory Officer designation for both. Cathi is the current Director of Children's Services for Northamptonshire County Council and has been leading the improvement agenda over the last year. She brings a wide range of both social care and business skills and experience to the role and has worked for a number of local authorities in her career in a variety of senior management roles. Cathi has also worked in the private sector specifically within the provision of fostering service.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 In accordance with part F of the Shadow Authority's Constitution, the Staff Employment Procedure Rules this recommendation was sent in confidence to each member of the Shadow Executive Committee in order to establish if any member of the Shadow Executive Committee had any objection to the proposed appointment. No objections from the Leader, on behalf of the Shadow Executive Committee have been raised to this recommendation.

Subject to ratification by the Shadow Authority, a start date will be confirmed with the candidates; taking into account their notice obligations.

6. Designation Recommendation for the Interim Monitoring Officer

- 6.1 At the inaugural meeting of the Shadow Authority on 2 June 2020, Susan Zeiss was appointed interim Monitoring Officer for the West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority, as per the requirements set out in the Northamptonshire (Structural Changes) Order 2020. Susan has now resigned from her position as she has been successful in securing a new role with another Council. Susan's appointment will end on 8 October 2020 and her last working day is 25th September 2020.
- 6.2 In order to comply with the Structural Change Orders, there is a requirement to appoint an interim Monitoring Officer for the West Shadow Authority for the period between 25 September 2020 and the start date for Catherine Whitehead, the permanent Director of Legal and Democratic Services/ Monitoring Officer (start date still to be confirmed).

The Interim Head of Paid Service therefore recommends that:

Andrew Hunkin is designated as the interim Monitoring Officer for the West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority with effect from 21st September 2020 to enable a short handover period with the current incumbent. This interim designation will cease when the permanent officer commences in post.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Policy

The appointment of Statutory Officers by 31 December 2020 is a requirement that is laid down in the Northamptonshire (Structural Changes) Order 2020.

7.2 Resources and Risk

The appointment of Statutory Officers will enable a safe and legal transition from the shadow authority to the Unitary Council in 2021.

7.3 Legal

The appointments to the Statutory Officer designations ensures compliance with the Northamptonshire (Structural Changes) Order 2020 and other relevant legislation.

7.4 Equality and Health

The appointment process followed a fair and transparent process. Eligible candidates were invited to apply to a national and open recruitment campaign.

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