

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2015 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Mrs S. Tomlinson (Chairman); Councillors Bayford, Campbell, Everitt, Fenner, I Gregory, King, Marson and Poole

In Attendance:

74. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received at the meeting.

75. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

76. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Members requested for an update on whether the costs for the investigation referred to in minute item 72 had been published in the public domain. Mr Steven Boyle, Legal Services Manager & Monitoring Officer agreed to check the figures and report back.

Councillor Campbell proposed, Councillor I. Gregory seconded and Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 October 2014. The Chairman signed the minutes as a correct record.

77. REPORT ON RECRUITMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Mr Boyle introduced the report. He indicated that the Council was in an unusual position of having to recruit to the post of the CEx; wherein such a post did not have a current incumbent who would have helped with the recruitment process and handover thereafter. Mr Boyle then sought the views of the Committee on the draft job description and the recruitment process.

Councillor Campbell proposed recommendations 6.1; 6.3 and 6.4 (that appeared in the report as a second recommendation 6.3). Councillor Everitt seconded the proposal.

Juli Oliver-Smith, Head of EKHR advised the meeting that recruitment plan was in place for the senior posts to have applications by 19 March 2015. She said that the aim was to have the CEx post appointment made by Full Council (on 23 April 2015). Gatenby Sanderson (Recruitment Consultants) hired by EKHR had specialist knowledge in recruiting for public services organisations. Juli Oliver-Smith said that in drafting the job description, officers compared with other local Councils in the EKHR partnership and the original Job Description for the joint role of CEx and S.151.

Some Members were concerned by the membership of the proposed initial panel where staff junior to the role of CEx were planned to interview the applicants to the more senior role. Juli Oliver-Smith said that this was not unusual and had been necessitated by the fact that there was no incumbent to that post who would have helped with the recruitment process. One Member suggested that the General Purposes Committee appoint a Selection Panel to select a candidate from a shortlist of between two and five candidates provided by the Assessment Centre.

Councillor Everitt suggested that the final decision to the appointment of a candidate be made by Full Council. Councillor Campbell proposed and Councillor Everitt seconded that the final recommended candidate be appointed by Full Council.

Some Members expressed the view that TDC officers should not take part in the selection process. They said that the power to conduct the selection and shortlisting should be rest with Councillors acting on the advice of the professionals. Juli said that a report for the General Purposes Committee will be prepared by EKHR after the Assessment Centre has conducted the initial interview and have come up with a shortlist. One Member suggested that if a situation arose where there was only one suitable candidate left instead of two, then the second best could be forwarded as well for consideration. Juli advised the Committee that care had to be taken when undertaking this process so that the Council complied with the employment laws.

Members agreed that the shortlist should be made up of between two and five candidates.

Members unanimously agreed the following:

1. That recruitment to the post of Chief Executive is commenced immediately and arrangements are made for the post to be advertised so that it is brought to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it;
2. That the Job Description be agreed in relation to the post subject to any amendments being delegated to the Leader and Chairman of General Purposes Committee in conjunction with the Monitoring Officer;
3. That a Selection Panel be created for second interview for this role consisting of the Leader of the Labour Group, Leader of the Conservative Group and the Leader of the Largest Independent Group as agreed in relation to the other statutory posts by GPC on 8th May 2014;
4. That the appointment of Madeline Homer to the role of Acting Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and all duties related be formally extended until final appointment of a new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service;
5. That Full Council appoints the Chief Executive (CEX) and Head of Paid Service.

Members made some suggested amendments to the job description in Annex to the Committee report and agreed that further amendments would be forward to officers outside the meeting by end of the week (13 February 2015).

Meeting concluded: 8.05 pm