

## **REPORT OF THE MEMBER APPOINTMENT PANEL**

### **1. APPOINTMENT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – PLACE, OPERATIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY**

- 1.1. At the meeting of the District Council on 10 October, the recruitment process to appoint a new Strategic Director – Place, Operations and Sustainability was agreed.
- 1.2. By virtue of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (as amended) ('the Regulations'), approval of appointment of a Chief Officer of the District Council is required to be done by the Full Council.
- 1.3. Following the recruitment process being agreed at Council, SOLACE, who provide an Executive Recruitment and Search service, were commissioned. Initial long listing and subsequent shortlisting was carried out by SOLACE. SOLACE then reported on the outcome of the suggested shortlist candidates to the Chief Executive and the Service Manager for Human Resources and a shortlist of five candidates was agreed.
- 1.4. The appointment panel was previously agreed at Council on 10 October and consisted of the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Opposition, and a non-executive Member to be determined by the Leader of the Council, (Cllr Steve Davies).
- 1.5. The five short listed candidates were then put through a rigorous assessment centre which included two psychometric assessments, a technical interview, a discussion with the Chief Executive and three separate exercises designed to look at problem solving, strategic awareness and political awareness.
- 1.6. SOLACE then reported on the outcome of the exercises to the Chief Executive, the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council. After discussion, a shortlist of three candidates was agreed.
- 1.7. Shortlisted candidates were interviewed by the Member Appointment Panel on 29 November 2022. These were three external candidates. The candidates also met with lead officers from relevant services.
- 1.8. The Member Appointment Panel unanimously agreed that their preferred candidate was James Carpenter, currently Head of Development and Corporate Landlord at South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council.

### **2. DETAILS OF INTERVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT**

- 2.1. By virtue of the requirements of the Regulations and the Council's Standing Orders, following selection of a preferred candidate Cabinet is required to be notified as to details of the proposed appointment, and not to have any objection to the recommendation of the Members' Appointment Panel. The Executive has accordingly been informed as to the details of the preferred candidate and has no objection to the appointment.

- 2.2. In accordance with the Regulations and Standing Orders the Council is now required to approve the appointment.

### **3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE APPOINTMENT**

- 3.1. As a result of the successful appointment of the Strategic Director and as set out in the report to Council on 10 October, this subsequently means that the postholders of Executive Head Planning, Regeneration and Economy and Executive Head Partnerships and Operations will be dismissed on the grounds of redundancy. The Council's redundancy and redeployment policies will be followed in this regard.
- 3.2. By virtue of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (as amended) ('the Regulations'), approval of dismissal of a Chief Officer of the District Council is required to be done by the Full Council.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. As set out in the report to Council on 10 October, the proposed restructure, going from four Executive Heads to three Strategic Directors, will result in an estimated saving in the region of £113,000 per annum. Maximum potential redundancy costs because of the restructure are £260,000. Any final one-off redundancy costs arising after the use of the Council's redundancy and redeployment policies will be funded by accrued reserves.
- 4.2. The supplemental investment in senior leadership through the wider leadership review will require funding of up to £200,000 per annum which is now included within the Council's latest Medium Term Financial Plan. The extended leadership team of the Council will all be clear on the role they will play in delivering a modern and transformed Council, including the delivery of necessary savings and income required to balance the Council's budget over the medium term.

#### ***RECOMMENDED:***

- 1. That the Council approves the appointment of James Carpenter as Strategic Director – Place, Operations and Sustainability of New Forest District Council.***
- 2. That the Council approves the dismissal on grounds of redundancy of the postholders: Executive Head, Partnerships and Operations and Executive Head Planning, Regeneration and Economy.***

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