

## **SENIOR LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS**

### **1. APPOINTMENT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES**

- 1.1. 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 made by the full Council.
- 1.2. Solace, who provide an Executive Recruitment and Search service, were commissioned. Initial long listing was carried out and a report on the suggested shortlist candidates was provided to the Chief Executive and the Service Manager for Human Resources and an initial shortlist of twelve candidates was agreed.
- 1.3. On 2nd January an appointment panel consisting of the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Main Opposition Group and the Chief Executive met and a final shortlist of four candidates was agreed.
- 1.4. The four short listed candidates were then put through a rigorous assessment centre which included two psychometric assessments, a technical interview, and three separate exercises designed to look at problem solving, strategic awareness and political awareness. The outcome of the exercises were reported to the interview panel as part of the interview process.
- 1.5. Shortlisted candidates were interviewed by a Member Appointment Panel on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024. There were three external candidates and one internal candidate. The candidates also met with lead officers from relevant services, and the other two Strategic Directors. Due to unforeseen circumstances the Chief Executive was unable to attend the interviews on this date.
- 1.6. The two preferred candidates from this process were then invited back for a further interview with the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council on 19<sup>th</sup> January.
- 1.7. The Member Appointment Panel unanimously agreed that their preferred candidate was Richard Knott the internal candidate, currently Assistant Director of Housing.
- 1.8. Richard joined the Council in 2018 and has undertaken a range of management roles for both statutory and landlord services in the housing service, more recently taking on the role of Assistant Director where he has been leading on the wide-ranging changes required in response to the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. Before this Richard worked for Christchurch and East Dorset Councils and for South Derbyshire District Council, where he successfully undertook his housing degree.
- 1.9. 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. Cabinet has accordingly been informed as to the details of the preferred candidate and has no objection to the appointment.

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

## **2. APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER (SUBSTANTIVE POST – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – GOVERNANCE)**

2.1. The Assistant Director – Governance role is also the Council’s Monitoring Officer.

2.2. Advice was sought from Solace on the recruitment market and process and following this an internal recruitment exercise has been undertaken with interviews held on 7<sup>th</sup> February. A member interview panel consisted of the Leader of the Council, Cllr Janet Richards, Cllr Mark Clark and Cllr Joe Reilly, along with the Chief Executive.

2.3. Separate interview/discussions were also held with the Strategic Directors as part of the overall process.

2.4. The Member Appointment Panel unanimously agreed that their preferred candidate was the internal candidate, Tanya Coulter, currently the Council’s Legal Services Manager.

2.5. Tanya has been with the Council since summer 2023 as Legal Services Manager. Tanya worked as a solicitor in the private sector and in-house for a housing association before moving into local government over 20 years ago where she worked as a solicitor before moving into various management roles. This included the role of Monitoring Officer for Bournemouth and Poole councils managing the elections, legal, democratic and information governance services for those councils up to and through the period of local government reorganisation.

2.6. 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 made by the full Council. This includes the post of Monitoring Officer.

### **RECOMMENDED:**

***(a) That the Council approves the appointment of Richard Knott as Strategic Director – Housing and Communities of New Forest District Council.***

***(b) That the Council approves the appointment of Tanya Coulter as Monitoring Officer of New Forest District Council (substantive post – Assistant Director – Governance).***

Heleana Aylett  
Service Manager – Human Resources