

Report of the Member Appointment Panel

Purpose	For Decision
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	<p>Following a review of our leadership structure in light of Local Government Reorganisation and the continued delivery of our council priorities the need for a new post of Chief Operations Officer / Deputy Chief Executive was established.</p> <p>The report outlines the recruitment process undertaken.</p> <p>Approval of appointment of a Chief Officer of the District Council is required to be done by the full Council.</p>
Recommendation(s)	That Richard Knott is appointed Chief Operations Officer / Deputy Chief Executive.
Reasons for recommendation(s)	The recommendation is made following the recruitment process outlined below.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Jill Cleary – Leader of the Council
Strategic Director(s)	Kate Ryan – Chief Executive
Officer Contact	Heleana Aylett HR Service Manager 02390 295662 Heleana.aylett@nfdc.gov.uk

Appointment of Chief Operations Officer / Deputy Chief Executive

1. This new role reflects the need for additional senior capacity and experience as we prepare for the opportunities and challenges of the next 3 years. It follows a review of our leadership structure in light of Local Government Reorganisation and the continued delivery

of our council priorities. A consultation was undertaken with those impacted and there was support for the new role and structure.

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 Council.
3. The appointment panel consisted of the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Opposition and the Chief Executive.
4. The candidates were asked to complete an exercise as part of the assessment. This related to the new post's role as Senior Responsible Officer for the development and oversight of an enterprise-wide PMO, assessing work in progress, and producing a briefing note summarising the key challenges and the council's assurance framework to ensure successful delivery of the council's priorities.
5. Candidates were interviewed by the Appointment Panel on 23 September 2025. There were three internal candidates.
6. The Appointment Panel unanimously agreed that their preferred candidate was Richard Knott, currently Strategic Director for Housing and Communities.

Recommendation for appointment

7. 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 details of the preferred candidate and has no objection to the appointment.
8. In accordance with the Regulations and Standing Orders the Council is now required to approve the appointment.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

None