

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Employment Committee held on Tuesday, 28 March 2017 at 12.15 pm in The Executive Meeting Room - Third Floor, The Guildhall

Present

Councillor Donna Jones (in the chair)
Councillor Luke Stubbs (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Jim Fleming
Councillor Darren Sanders
Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE

Officers Present

David Williams, Chief Executive
Michael Lawther, Deputy Chief Executive and City Solicitor
Shaun Tetley, Payroll and Pensions Manager
Rochelle Brown, Assistant Director of HR

9. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor John Ferrett.

Mr Jon Bell also sent apologies for absence.

10. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of members' interests.

11. Exclusion of Press and Public (AI 3)

The Chair explained that although there is provision to move the meeting into exempt session, the intention was to keep as much of the meeting as possible in open session. If Members wished to discuss the contents of the exempt appendix, then it would be proposed that the meeting would move into exempt session at that point.

12. Senior Management Structure (AI 4)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

A deputation was made by Mr Jerry Brown which included querying why the appendix was exempt, why Full Council did not first decide the suggested pay grade of the person they are recruiting for and then recruit, (rather than the

other way round) and also why the Director of Regulatory Services and Community Safety was not deleted in 2015.

The Chair thanked Mr Brown for his deputation and invited the Chief Executive, David Williams, to introduce the report which he then did.

The Chief Executive said that paragraph 3.4 of the report explains that a dedicated chief officer post is required in order to drive the continued development and delivery of the council's regeneration agenda. He went on to explain that the new role requires specialist skills that are in demand by many cities and that it is envisaged that the recruitment process may take up to six months. The Chief Executive said that paragraph 3.7 sets out the process for the appointment which is to seek the approval of the Full Council once the member panel had selected a preferred candidate. He explained that it was not particularly unusual for posts where the likely grade pays in excess of £100k to be appointed in this way - all Chief Executive posts followed this pattern. The process would be made clear to candidates.

With regard to exempt Appendix A, this contained the Director of Finance's costs and savings. The appendix was exempt in order to protect personal information from being divulged. It would not be possible to calculate this just by using information already in the public domain as the calculation was influenced by many factors such as whether the person had taken any breaks in service or had not been a member of the pension scheme etc. The details contained in the exempt appendix could be discussed by Members in exempt session if they wished to do so. The Chief Executive said that the Director of Transport Environment and Business Support was willing to remain in post whilst the new position is filled.

The Chair thanked the Chief Executive for introducing the report and said that she intended that the meeting should remain in open session until members wished to discuss the exempt appendix.

During discussion the following matters were clarified

- It was confirmed that confidentiality agreements had not been made with both directors
- With regard to the new post, it was confirmed that a Special Council meeting could be convened to approve the appointment relatively easily if there was no suitable scheduled Council meeting.
- A query was raised about why no request for Voluntary Redundancy approval had been brought to the committee in respect of the Director of Regulatory Services and Community Safety. It was confirmed that redundancies could be agreed outside the Employment Committee - the Executive are able to do that and this is what happened in the case of the Director of Regulatory Services and Community Safety
- In respect of the Director of Transport Environment and Business Support, the money from that post was ring-fenced for the new post. The creation of the new post had to be brought to Employment Committee for approval. There is no requirement under the City Council's processes to take the decision concerning the redundancy of

Directors to a public decision meeting. The report is about finding money for the new post, not about directors leaving.

- In response to a query about what had changed since the last senior management restructure in 2015, the Chief Executive said that the economy had changed and the focus of the Council was now more on income generation. The new post holder would report to the Chief Executive.
- In response to a comment that the post itself was very broad - being based on infrastructure but absorbing transport within it - the Chief Executive said that he recognised the post represented a shift and that it was important that the city was effectively managed. The skills required would include anticipating market demand for office space, shops etc and that "soft" infrastructure - such as skills - was likely to become increasingly important. Portsmouth has particular constraints so he recognised the importance of recruiting someone who has appropriate skills.
- With regard to a query raised on the detail of how the savings mentioned in paragraph 6 could be achieved, the Chief Executive said that the detail was contained in the exempt appendix.
- The Chief Executive said that if a suitable candidate for the post could not be found, then officers and the Executive would regroup and consider what then to do. Meanwhile the Director of Transport Environment and Business Support would continue in post if he wished to do so.
- The Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation said that the shape and structure of transport has already been looked at with a view to ensuring a well- run and well managed service is in place.
- It was confirmed that if an appointment was to be made with a salary exceeding £100,000, then that would need to be approved at Full Council. The Chair said that she would expect the Group Leader of the Opposition to be on the interview panel. Place is very important and there were some big issues that would need to be considered in Portsmouth such as looking at rebuilding the bottom of the motorway. She also said that there was a need to provide a briefing about the new role to all members but that she considered that the briefing would be better held once the person is in post. It was envisaged that once in post the person would be able to shape the role and the teams.
- The Vice-chair of the Committee said that since the last restructure in 2015, funding from central government had been cut dramatically and the resulting reduction in staff and functions was driving management changes. It was important particularly in relation to transport that best use is made of the infrastructure we have.
- The Chief Executive confirmed that the new role was not just a strategic role but was also about delivering projects. The person being sought would have to demonstrate that they had actively been involved in the planning and implementation of major schemes..
- Members were advised that it was not anticipated that the costs outlined would be affected by the outcome of the Treasury Consultation on exit payments, but if there was a need to review, then it was anticipated that a further report would be brought back to Employment Committee.

- With regard to a query about making the post of Director of Place redundant in 2015 and then introducing this new post, the Chief Executive said that the new post was a different post requiring different skills and a different management structure was being created.
- With regard to a query about why there was only one confidentiality agreement in place, the Chief Executive said that matters concerning the Director of Transport Environment and Business Support role were being brought to this meeting and it was not correct procedurally to pre-empt any decision of the Committee.

The Chair commented that this is phase 2 of the management re-structure and that further changes may be required. Although the revenue support grant had been halved since 2015, the report today was not primarily about saving money but was about making the Council more effective and efficient. It was important to cover the "place" services (mentioned in paragraph 3.2) effectively. She said there is a need to balance the needs of the city centre with business regeneration for example. Business rates are increasingly important and therefore there is a need to lead in regeneration. Cities that have done this ensure stakeholder interest. The report is about making Portsmouth as effective and efficient as it can be and there is a need to recruit a person of sufficient standing to deliver that. The Chair wanted to place on record thanks to all those currently working on regeneration.

It was agreed that recommendation 4 should be amended to include thanks to the Director of Regulatory Services and Community Safety.

It was

proposed by Councillor Donna Jones

seconded by Councillor Luke Stubbs

That the meeting move into exempt session and this was agreed.

The Chief Executive explained the content of the exempt appendix giving details of the anticipated recruitment costs, savings from the posts and payback period. He also answered some specific queries on the figures contained in the exempt appendix.

It was

proposed by Councillor Donna Jones

seconded by Councillor Luke Stubbs

That the meeting move back into open session and this was agreed.

RESOLVED that Members

- (i) Approve the creation of the new post of Director of Regeneration, as detailed in section 3.4 of the report.**
- (ii) Note that an appointment to the above post will be subject to approval by Full Council if the salary for the post exceeds £100,000.**

- (iii) Approve the voluntary redundancy of the Director of Transport Environment and Business Support.**
- (iv) Record thanks to Ms Rachael Dalby and Mr Alan Cufley for their service to the council and to wish them both the very best for the future.**

The meeting concluded at 1.05 pm.

Councillor Donna Jones
Chair