

URGENCY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.00 pm on 21 August 2013

Present

Councillor Tony Owen (Chairman)

Councillors Graham Arthur, Stephen Carr, Judi Ellis,
Robert Evans, Peter Fookes, Russell Mellor and Tom Papworth

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the Mayor, Councillor Eric Bosshard and Councillor Stephen Wells. Councillor Judi Ellis as Deputy Mayor attended in place of the Mayor and Councillor Russell Mellor attended as alternate for Councillor Bosshard.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29TH MAY 2013

The minutes were agreed.

4 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR POSTS : SALARY PACKAGE

Report HHR 13002

Approval was sought to urgently recruit two Interim Assistant Directors in the Education, Care and Public Health Services Department on a temporary/fixed term contract on a salary in excess of £100,000 per annum but not exceeding £110k per annum (including lease car or pay in lieu).

The current pay policy for Chief Officers (which includes deputy Chief Officers within the meaning of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) requires Members to approve large salary packages in respect of new appointments, the threshold considered by the Secretary of State being £100,000 per year. Salary packages will include salary, bonuses, fees or allowances routinely payable to the new recruit and any benefits in kind to which the officer is entitled as a result of their employment.

As the posts would be filled on a temporary/fixed term contract, the Council would need to offer a good salary package to attract quality recruits away from established and stable environments. A key challenge was to ensure that pay levels remain attractive and competitive so the Council can recruit and retain quality staff, especially staff charged with managing high profile Member priorities.

The post of Assistant Director, Adult Care Services, became vacant following the (normal) retirement of the previous post holder earlier in the year. The Director needed to secure the commitment and services of an agency staff member procured to fill the gap by offering him a temporary/fixed contract for six months initially with the L B Bromley.

The Director was also seeking a temporary replacement for the post of Assistant Director, Education, which would become vacant from 1st November 2013. In consultation with the Chief Executive and the Portfolio Holder, the Director, was keen to find a quality replacement immediately to ensure very little, or no, gap between the new person starting and the current post holder's departure.

In discussion and referring to the Adult Care Services post, the Executive Director, Education, Care and Health Services, referred to the suitability of the current temporary post holder. He also referred to the high financial return required from agencies.

For the post of Assistant Director, Education, it would not be possible to secure a full time appointment until January 2014. Again, there would be high costs in procuring an appointment via an employment agency. A consultant employed by the Department in the previous six to eight weeks had performed well and following initial approaches, had confirmed a willingness to work for the authority. The Executive Director was not convinced the post could be filled satisfactorily via an employment agency.

Councillor Evans supported the Director's comments on the performance of the proposed temporary post holder for the Adult Care Services post. The post was needed to oversee current work and future care proposals and how this is undertaken. For the Education post, he also commended the consultant's work in respect of the Pupil Referral Unit.

In view of the last day in post for the current Assistant Director, Education being 31st October 2013, it was explained there would be a period of about a month working in partnership with the new appointment who, it was proposed, would start on 30th September 2013. A partnership approach would be taken as a new appointment could not initially work full time and it would not be possible for the current Assistant Director, Education to continue full time during this period.

The Director HR confirmed that each appointment would be on a temporary fixed term contract which could be extended initially for a fixed period of time. This could subsequently be renewed by the Director as appropriate. The contract for both appointments would be to 31st March 2014 with an opportunity provided at the three month stage to confirm the appointment.

If appointing the temporary post holder in Adult Social Care, Councillor Mellor sought assurance that there would be no liability on the Council from the employment agency for appointing the officer. The Director, HR confirmed there would be no liabilities on the Council after 14 weeks i.e. no "poaching fee".

The recommendations were put to a vote and it was **RESOLVED** that:

(1) the proposal to appoint an Assistant Director, Adult Care Services, on a temporary/fixed term contract not exceeding £110k per annum including lease car or pay in lieu of a lease car be agreed; and

(2) the proposal to appoint an Interim Assistant Director, Education, on a temporary/fixed term contract not exceeding £110k per annum including lease car or pay in lieu of a lease car be agreed.

The Meeting ended at 6.13 pm

Chairman