
Report to COUNCIL

Appointment of the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

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1st November 2023

Reason for Decision

The Appointments Committee recommend to Council the appointment of Harry Catherall as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service for Oldham Council.

Recommendations

The Appointments Committee recommend that Council:

- Approves and continues the appointment of Harry Catherall as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on a part-time (0.6FTE), two-year fixed term contract effective from 1st January 2024;
- Approves a salary of £108,000 for Harry Catherall (0.6 pro-rata of the full salary and subject to any nationally agreed pay awards);
- Appoint Harry Catherall as Electoral Registration Officer for any constituency or part of a constituency coterminous with or contained in Oldham Metropolitan Borough and Returning Officer for Local elections, Parish Council and Parliamentary elections and local returning officer for Greater Manchester Combined Authority mayoral election and other elections and referenda;
- Note Appointments Committee have redesignated Executive Director Place and Economic Growth back to Deputy Chief Executive Place and Economic Growth at the salary banding of £136,542 (subject to any nationally agreed pay awards) and note that Appointments Committee approved the variation in contract for the existing postholder following appropriate internal HR process
- Appointments Committee recommends that Emma Barton be offered the 0.4 FTE Chief Executive development role at a salary of £147,925 (inclusive of Deputy Chief Executive

salary plus a supplement payment for the 0.4 pro rata development role and subject to any national pay awards)

Appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

1 Background

1.1 During Summer 2023 the Council undertook a full and thorough external recruitment process for the post of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), including an extended advert process and utilising the skills of an appropriate recruitment agency. There has been an extensive search over several months of the regional and national market for our next Chief Executive.

However, during this time, it has also become apparent just how challenging the market for Senior Executives has become in the public sector. In addition, the scale of challenges facing the sector makes the need for current experience at Chief Executive level more vital. We are aware that we are not the only Local Authority in the Northwest who have been to external market and have been unable to appoint.

1.2 It is a statutory requirement that the Council has a Head of Paid Service, (Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) and therefore the Appointments Committee decided to halt the current process and explored an extension to Harry Catherall's current contract.

1.3 The Appointments Committee met on 22nd September 2023 and recommends to Council that Harry Catherall be offered a variation and extension of the post of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on a part-time (0.6 FTE), two-year fixed term contract effective from 1st January 2024.

1.4 Appointments Committee recommends that Harry Catherall be paid a salary of £108,000 (0.6 pro-rata).

1.5 Following this decision, the Appointments Committee met again on the 5th October 2023 to consider a report to strengthen the executive structure that reports directly to the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service role and agreed an internal process for the selection of a Chief Executive development role (0.4 FTE).

1.6 Set tasks and duties were agreed for the 0.4FTE element of the role that provide an opportunity for internal skills development and provides cover commensurate with the level of the post. This arrangement provides strong officer leadership, continuity and stability, whilst at the same time, providing an opportunity to identify and develop a potential future Chief Executive from within Oldham – an innovative “Grow our Own” approach that has the support of the LGA and is being viewed as good practice.

1.7 The Appointments Committee recommends that the post of Executive Director Place and Economic Growth be redesignated to Deputy Chief Executive Place and Economic Growth, the structure and salary banding (subject to increases from National pay awards) having been previously agreed by Council 3rd November 2021.

1.8 At the Appointments Committee meeting of 19th October 2023, a selection process was completed for the Chief Executive development role (0.4 FTE) and it is recommended that the role be covered by Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive Place.

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- 1.9 Appointments Committee recommends that Emma Barton be paid a salary of £147,925, which is inclusive of her Deputy Chief Executive salary and a supplement payment of the 0.4 pro-rata development role.
 - 1.10 At the point of the current Chief Executive completing the fixed term contract/or serving notice, the individual covering the 0.4 FTE of the role will have no call on the full role, and the Appointments Committee will be required to decide on the process for appointment of the next Chief Executive.
 - 1.11 Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive Place remains in her substantive post and would cover only 0.4 FTE of the Chief Executive role as a development opportunity. The arrangement would be reviewed on a 12 monthly basis by Appointments Committee.

2 **Financial Implications**

- 2.1 The proposed options within this paper would generate a saving of approximately £36,500 plus associated on costs.

Lee Walsh, Assistant Director of Finance (Financial Management)

3 **Legal Services Comments**

- 3.1 Council is required to appoint a Head of Paid Service.

Paul Entwistle, Director of Legal

4. **Co-operative Implications**

- 4.1 Supports the Council's Co-operative Agenda

5 **Human Resources Comments**

- 5.1 All changes proposed within this report following existing policy and guidance and any staff directly affected by the proposals will be consulted in line with the Council's agreed procedures for implementing structural changes.

Vikki Morris, Assistant Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development

6 **Risk Assessments**

- 6.1 N/A

7 **IT Implications**

- 7.1 None

8 **Property Implications**

- 8.1 None

9 **Procurement Implications**

- 9.1 None

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- 10 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**
 - 10.1 None
 - 11 **Community cohesion disorder implications in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**
 - 11.1 None
 - 12 **Oldham Impact Assessment Completed (Including impact on Children and Young People)**
 - 12.1 No
 - 13 **Key Decision**
 - 13.1 No
 - 14 **Background Papers**
 - 14.1 None