

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Director of Children Services Permanent Recruitment Proposal</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Personnel Board – 14 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
<b>WARD</b>	Non-Specific
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Executive Director Children, Adults & Health

## RECOMMENDATION

### That Personnel Board:

Approves the proposed recruitment process for the appointment of a permanent Director of Children's Services

## SUMMARY OF REPORT

### Background

The Director of Children Services has been covered on an interim basis since December 2021 and with the new Directorate of Children, Adults & Health being set up in July 2023 this post will now be filled permanently.

### Proposal

Given the level of this role and the importance of it to Wokingham we will be advertising internally and externally which will ensure we engage with a wide sector of experienced individuals who will be able to help the Council achieve its strategic ambition to create a happy and healthy community. We will openly welcome applications from internal candidates.

### Recruitment Process

It is proposed that the recruitment process outlined below will be followed for the Director appointment. The Council will lead & facilitate the search for the Director position.

### Person & Role Specification Briefing

A role and person briefing will be undertaken with Matt Pope the Executive Director Children Adults & Health and Helen Watson, as the current Director of Childrens Services and someone who has been engaged on a fixed term basis, with the Recruitment Specialists in the HR team to gather key person and role specification requirements.

### Advertising Stage

- The advert will be placed in the MJ, Jobs Go Public, The Guardian, Community Care, Ad Warrior and on the Council website and WBC LinkedIn page.
- The costs will be for adverts and job boards only
  - The Guardian Silver option £970
  - Job Boards £299
  - The MJ Advert Costs £5,950

### **Initial Evaluation & Long Listing Stage**

An initial evaluation to assess candidates written submissions against the person specification and agreed competencies will be undertaken by the HR team. A full report of all applicants will be prepared which will sort candidates into three categories:

- A: recommended applicants
- B: applicants that merit further consideration/discussion
- C: applicants not recommended

A virtual long-list meeting will take place with designated CLT Officers to agree which candidates to take forward.

### **Technical Interview Stage**

Selected candidates will undergo a technical interview with Helen Watson (Director of Children's Services) and another suitable external specialist, which could either be a DCS peer or the LGA. These interviews will probe candidates' technical ability to undertake the role as well as their wider strategic understanding.

### **Short Listing Stage**

Based on the above interviews, a full report will be prepared which will sort candidates into two categories:

- Recommended
- Not Recommended.

It is proposed that a shortlist meeting takes place with Personnel Board w/c 16<sup>th</sup> October (to be confirmed) to decide which candidates to take forward.

### **Final Assessment Stage**

Following approval, shortlisted candidates will go through to interview, which will include:

- Direct Reports to the role – this should either include safeguarding element or a separate safeguarding panel;
- CLT members – peers to the role
- External stakeholders – representatives from schools/education, social care, children's homes etc.
- Voice of the Child – children reps
- Fireside Chat – 2 :1 informal with Chief Exec, and Executive Director Children, Adults & Health.  
Personality Questionnaire – not a panel but an option for selection.
- Personnel Board Interview

### **Appointment Stage**

The successful candidate name and details will be share with the Executive.

Once final decisions are made, all candidates whether successful or otherwise will be notified with the appropriate feedback.

### **Timescales**

**Director of Children Services - Recruitment.**

Action	Date
Final sign off: Advert, interview with MJ, microsite, all Agent briefings completed.	Wc 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
Go live: Search and advertising	Wc 18 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
Closing date	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Longlist report complete and shared	Wc 16 <sup>th</sup> October
Longlist meeting	Wc 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Preliminary interviews (Technical Interview with Helen Watson)	Wc 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
Shortlist Meeting with <b>Personnel Board</b>	Wc 6 <sup>th</sup> November
Panel interview with CLT, meeting/interview with key stakeholders and interview with <b>Personnel Board</b>	Wc 13 <sup>th</sup> November

Personnel Board will be engaged in our search to identify the most appropriate candidates for the roles and thank the Board in advance for their time and commitment to this recruitment process.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION**

	How much will it Cost	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	c£198k (incl £7k for advertising)	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	c£191k	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	c£191k	Yes	Revenue

**Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision**

None

**Cross-Council Implications**

This leadership role is a key statutory role in Children's services and will work across the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and Extended Leadership Team (ECLT) which includes all Chief Officers in the organisation.

**Reasons for considering the report in Part 2****List of Background Papers**

N/A

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