

Report for: COUNCIL

Date of Meeting:	24 February 2022
Subject:	Recruitment of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
Responsible Officer:	Hugh Peart, Monitoring Officer
Exempt:	No
Wards affected:	All

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the proposed process for the appointment of a new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service as the current postholder, Sean Harriss, is due to leave the Council's employ in June 2022. The report also sets out a proposal for the appointment of the Leader of the Council following the Borough Elections in May 2022.

Recommendations: That

1. the Chief Officers' Employment Panel for the purposes only of selecting a preferred candidate as Harrow's Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service be made up of the Leaders and Deputies from the 2 largest Groups, plus 2 councillors nominated by the Leader of the largest Group, and 1 councillor nominated by the Leader of the second largest Group;
 2. an Extraordinary Council meeting be called during the week commencing either 9th or 16th May to:
 - Appoint the Leader of the Council until May 2026;
 - Appoint a new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service;
 - Receive notification of Deputy Leader
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Section 2 – Report

Background

The fixed term contract for Sean Harriss, Harrow's current Chief Executive, expires in the Autumn. The recruitment market for Chief Executives is currently very competitive, given the numbers of departures both across London and in neighbouring Boroughs, and being able to confirm an appointment as quickly as possible will help Harrow secure the best possible candidate to replace him.

Appointment Process for a Chief Executive

The Chief Officers' Employment Panel ('COEP') is responsible for overseeing the recruitment process, reviewing the role profile, salary package etc, agreeing a longlisting and shortlisting process, and selecting a preferred candidate as the Head of Paid Service. All members of Cabinet must then be advised of the preferred candidate and given an opportunity to make any well-founded objections to their appointment. Assuming no such objections are made, the recommendation from COEP will be put to full Council, who are responsible for making the appointment. There may then be a delay of up to 3 months before the appointee takes up the post in Harrow if they have to serve notice.

Proposal

The Borough Elections will take place in Harrow on Thursday 5 May 2022, with the count on Friday 6 May. It is suggested that COEP meet during the following week commencing 9 May to select a preferred candidate, having already agreed a shortlist prior to the election. It is proposed that the COEP for these purposes comprise 4 elected Members from the largest Group, and 3 from the second largest Group, to include the Leader and Deputy from each Group with the other Members nominated by the Group Leaders. Current Councillors who are not standing or who are not re-elected cease to hold office on 9th May 2022.

It is further proposed that an Extraordinary Council meeting be called either later that same week or during the following week, commencing 16 May, to consider only the appointments of Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) and to receive the notification of Deputy Leader, presided over by the current Mayor/Deputy Mayor (as they hold office until the next Annual Meeting). The first item of business would be the appointment of Leader, and once this has been agreed, the Leader would be invited to announce their Cabinet. Following a short adjournment whilst members of Cabinet are invited to confirm that they have no well-founded objections to the appointment of the candidate recommended by COEP, Full Council would be invited to reconvene, and agree the appointment of a new Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service).

The appointment of the Mayor for 2022/23 and notification of Deputy Mayor, the allocation of responsibilities, establishment of Committees and appointments of Chairs of committees would be determined at the scheduled

Annual Council meeting on 26th May 2022. In addition, the results of the Borough Elections will also be reported.

Other considerations

The Council's Constitution requires that the Council shall appoint a Leader at its Annual Meeting after whole Council elections. The proposal outlined above includes the variation of this provision.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No

Council Priorities

The Chief Executive and Head of Paid Services works to meet all of the Council's agreed priorities.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Dawn Calvert

Signed by the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 16 February 2022

Statutory Officer: Hugh peart

Signed by the Monitoring Officer

Date: 16 February 2022

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Hugh Peart, Monitoring Officer

Background Papers: None