

REPORT FOR: **COUNCIL**

Date of Meeting:

Thursday 27TH February 2014

Subject:

Appointment of Statutory Officers

Responsible Officer:

Jon Turner, Divisional Director Human Resources, Development & Shared Services

Exempt:

No

Enclosures:

None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out steps Council needs to take to ensure statutory roles are filled following the resignation of the Chief Executive

Recommendations:

Council is requested to appoint:
Paul Najsarek, Corporate Director Community Health & Wellbeing as Interim Head of Paid Service; and
Hugh Peart, Director Legal & Governance Services as Returning Officer.

Background

On 7th November 2013 the Chief Executive resigned from his employment with Harrow, and his last day of service is 28th February 2014. The Chief Executive is currently the Council's Head of Paid Service and Returning Officer, two roles which the Council is required to fill.

Head of Paid Service

Under s4 Local Government & Housing Act 1989 Harrow is required to designate one of its officers as the Head of their Paid Service and to provide them with such staff, accommodation & resources as are required to discharge the Council's functions.

Returning Officer

Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, Harrow is required to appoint one of its officers to be the Returning Officer. The duties of the Returning Officer are separate from their duties as a local government officer, and they are paid in accordance with Harrow's published Pay Policy. The Returning Officer is directly accountable to the Courts as an independent statutory office holder, and the Council is required to place the services of its officers at their disposal during elections.

Appointment of Interim Head of Paid Service

It is a Council function to confirm the appointment of its Head of Paid Service, upon receipt of a recommendation from the Chief Officers' Employment Panel. The Chief Officer Employment Panel met on November 14th and 26th 2013 to deal with issues arising from the resignation of the Chief Executive. The Panel agreed the job outline for a Corporate Director and Interim Head of Paid Service and that the person appointed to that post receive an allowance of £10,000 p.a. in addition to his/her current salary. The Corporate Directors were invited to indicate whether they wished to act as interim Head of Paid Service during the absence of the Chief Executive and after his resignation takes effect.

There was only one application. The Panel considered the application and supporting statement and agreed to recommend to Council that the Corporate Director of Community Health & Wellbeing, be appointed as Corporate Director and Interim Head of Paid Service with effect from 1st March 2014.

Appointment of Returning Officer

It is a Council function to appoint its Returning Officer. Council appointed the Chief Executive as Returning Officer in July 2013 with the Monitoring Officer (Director of Legal & Governance Services) as Deputy Returning Officer. Prior to this, the role of Returning Officer was successfully undertaken by the Monitoring Officer. Local & national elections are overseen by the Electoral Commission, which has issued a series of Performance Indicators. Since 2009, when they were introduced, the Monitoring Officer has met all those standards, and exceeded many. Accordingly it is recommended that the Monitoring Officer be re-appointed the Council's Returning Officer with effect from 1st March 2014. The Returning Officer may appoint deputies as required.

Implications of the Recommendations

The Council will meet its statutory requirement to appoint a Head of Paid Service and Returning Officer.

Following the local election in May 2014, the Council will need to consider arrangements for the appointment of a permanent Head of Paid Service. Upon the appointment of a permanent Head of Paid Service, the requirement for an Interim Head of Paid Service will cease and unless appointed to the permanent role, Paul Najsarek will return to his substantive post of Corporate Director, Community Health & Wellbeing.

Legal comments

There are no additional legal comments to those contained within this report.

Financial Implications

The additional payment of £10k per annum to reflect the additional duties of Head of Paid Service will be offset by the saving of the Chief Executive's salary.

The costs of GLA, National and European elections are met externally, and by Harrow in relation to local elections. The proposed arrangements will deliver a small saving to Harrow.

Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No

There are no specific equalities implications relating either to service delivery or to employment issues arising out of this report.

Priorities

The appointment of a Head of Paid Service and Returning Officer enable the Council to meet its statutory requirements and the administration's priority to deliver a cleaner, safer and fairer Harrow.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Simon George



Chief Financial Officer

Date: 19 February 2014

Name: Linda Cohen



on behalf of the*
Monitoring Officer

Date: 13 January 2014

Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Jon Turner Divisional Director HRD & Shared Services
jon.turner@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Report to Cabinet 15 January 2014: Senior Management Structure
<http://www.harrow.gov.uk/www2/mgChooseDocPack.aspx?ID=61435>