

Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils

Report to: Joint Senior Staff Committee

Date: 18 July 2024

Ward(s) affected: N/A

Report of Head of Paid Service

Author: Jon Formby

Tel: 01483 523499

Email: jon.formby@waverley.gov.uk

Report Status: Open

Appointment of Joint Strategic Director for Housing, Communities and Environment

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following the departure of Annie Righton, the search for a permanent appointment has been carried out with Penna.
- 1.2 This report sets out details of the recruitment campaign and selection process, which has led to the shortlisting of four candidates for final interviews by the Joint Senior Staff Committee (JSSC).
- 1.3 The timetable for the day of the meeting is set out in exempt **Appendix 3**.
- 1.4 The JSSC is asked to conduct the final interviews of shortlisted candidates and, where appropriate, to make a formal offer of appointment, which would be subject to no material or well-founded objection being made by either of the two Council Leaders on behalf of their respective Executives in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 5 of Part II of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (“the 2001 Regulations”).

- 1.5 If the preferred candidate has a contractual notice period to serve in respect of their current employment, or if the JSSC is unable to recommend a candidate it will be necessary to consider the continuation of an interim Strategic Director in this role. The ability to make this decision for interim senior appointments of up to six months is currently delegated to the Head of Paid Service, with a requirement to report back to the JSSC after consultation with the leaders of Waverley and Guildford.

2. Recommendation to Committee

- 2.1 The JSSC is asked to consider whether an appointment to the role of Joint Strategic Director for Housing, Communities and Environment post should be agreed, which will be made subject to no material or well-founded objection being made by either of the two Council Leaders on behalf of their respective Executives.

3. Reasons for Recommendation:

- 3.1. To appoint a Joint Strategic Director for Housing, Communities and Environment, as part of the agreed collaboration arrangements between Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils.

4. Exemption from publication

Yes. **Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5.**

- 4.1 The content of **Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5** is to be treated as exempt from the Access to Information publication rules because the process for candidate selection will involve the disclosure, or likely disclosure of personal information about the candidates and is therefore exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as follows:

(1) "Information relating to any individual".

- 4.2 The content is restricted to the members of the JSSC.

- 4.3 It is not anticipated that the exempt information can be expected to be made available for public inspection.
- 4.4 The decision to maintain the exemption may be challenged by any person at the point at which the Committee is invited to pass a resolution to exclude the public from the meeting to consider the exempt information.

5. Purpose of Report

5.1 Following the departure of Annie Righton, the JSSC is invited to interview the shortlisted candidates and agree the formal appointment of a new Joint Strategic Director for Housing, Communities and Environment, as per the role profile included in **Appendix 1**.

5.2 The JSSC's role, as set out in its terms of reference, is:

“Adopting and exercising such of the functions of Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council (“the councils”) as can be delegated by those councils in respect of the appointment of the councils’ Joint Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service and any Joint Statutory Officer and Director posts as are covered by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (as amended) or any successor regulations.”

6. Strategic Priorities

6.1 The Joint Strategic Director for Housing, Communities and Environment plays a pivotal role in the delivery of Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils’ aspirations set out in their emerging Corporate Strategies.

7. Background

7.1. The search for a permanent appointment of a new Joint Strategic Director for Housing, Communities and Environment has been carried

out in conjunction with Penna. A copy of the advertisement in respect of the post is included in **Appendix 1**.

7.2. The selection process consisted of the following steps:

- The creation of a microsite and advert in the Municipal Journal
- Advertising of the role on the web recruitment platforms of Waverley and Guildford Borough Council
- An executive search recruitment campaign through Penna
- Initial telephone calls with interested candidates and the Joint Chief Executive of Waverley and Guildford
- An initial meeting to draw up a longlist with Penna, the Joint Chief Executive and the Waverley Human Resources Manager with recommended candidates drawn up by Penna and a follow up shortlist meeting with the Joint Chief Executive and Waverley Human Resources Manager to finalise those shortlisted for interview by the JSSC.
- A technical interview with each shortlisted candidate carried out by Penna and an experienced Technical Assessor, Heather Clarke, Director of Housing Needs, Westminster City Council.
- A summary is included in exempt **Appendix 5**.
- Staff Panel – The staff panel is made up of a group of staff from the relevant service areas from Waverley and Guildford and also includes an Equalities representative and a Union representative.
- Stakeholder Panel – the stakeholder panel is made up of a group of senior external stakeholders which the role would need to engage with and build a professional working relationship.
- Meetings with Strategic Directors

7.3 Copies of the CVs and supporting statements of each of the shortlisted candidate are included in exempt **Appendix 2**.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 Under the collaboration agreement, the cost of employing a Joint Strategic Director is split equally between the two councils, with Waverley being the employing council.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 The JSSC is responsible for the recruitment and selection process of the Joint Strategic Directors and for appointing their preferred candidates.
- 9.2 The offer of appointment as Joint Strategic Director may only be made where no well-founded objection has been made by the Leaders of both councils on behalf of their respective Executives, with the ability to raise an objection being limited to a member(s) of the Executive via the Leader, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 5 of Schedule 1 Part II of the 2001 Regulations.

10. Human Resource Implications

- 10.1 The Joint Strategic Director for Housing, Communities and Environment is a member of the Corporate Leadership Team at Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils.

11. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 11.1 Equality impact assessments are carried out when necessary to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. There are no immediate equality, diversity, or inclusion implications in this report's recommendations. Impact assessments may be required as further collaboration proposals are developed and implemented and will be reported as appropriate.

12. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 12.1 The climate emergency declaration and the urgent target for net zero carbon by 2030 is a critical objective for both councils. While no specific impacts on the climate emergency declaration have been

identified as a consequence of this report's recommendations, the Councils will be assessing and prioritising the environmental, climate and carbon impacts of any proposals that emerge.

13. Background Papers

None

14. Appendices

Appendix 1: JSSC Recruitment Pack Part One

Including:

- Strategic Director Job Profile
- Strategic Director Job Advert

Appendix 2: Curriculum Vitae of the shortlisted candidates (EXEMPT)

Appendix 3: Timetable of Interviews with Candidates (EXEMPT) – TO FOLLOW

Appendix 4: Suggested Questions for each of the shortlisted candidates (EXEMPT) – TO FOLLOW

Appendix 5: Technical Assessments for each of the shortlisted candidates (EXEMPT) – TO FOLLOW