

Committee/Date:	Council, 25 May 2023
Report Title:	Appointment of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
Directorate:	Chief Executive
Contact Details	Martin Cox, Corporate Director of People, Organisational Development and Business Support  Email: Martin.Cox@WalthamForest.gov.uk
Wards affected:	None specifically
Public Access	Open
Appendices	None

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Council is required to appoint an officer as Head of Paid Service (i.e. in Waltham Forest, the Chief Executive) under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 require that the appointment of Head of Paid Service is a decision to be taken by the Council before a final offer of appointment is made.
- 1.2. This report sets out the approach adopted to identify the best candidate for the role and asks the Council to approve the unanimous recommendation made by the Staffing Committee Appointment Panel to appoint Linzi Roberts-Egan to the role of Chief Executive, Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. The Staffing Committee Appointment Panel recommends that Council:
  - 2.1.1. Approve the appointment of Linzi Roberts-Egan as the Council's Chief Executive, Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer at spinal point 3 of the Chief Executive salary scale (currently £212,227) of the Council's pay scales and delegate to her all Chief Executive functions, and
  - 2.1.2. Note that the start date will be agreed as part of the contract of employment, subject to Council's approval of the appointment.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. The Council has conducted open and national recruitment campaign to recruit its new Chief Executive to replace Martin Esom, who after 13

years in the role, gave the Council notice of his departure earlier this year.

- 3.2. An in-depth recruitment process was undertaken from February to April 2023, supported by the Council's appointed executive recruitment consultant. A total of 23 candidates applied to the Council for the role.
- 3.3. A long list of prospective candidates attended a technical interview led by our recruitment consultant with an experienced senior leader from local government.
- 3.4. On 2 May, shortlisted candidates attended engagement sessions with five stakeholder panels; including, staff and unions, partners, young people, senior leadership team, and Cabinet (excluding those on the interview panel).
- 3.5. On 3 May, an appointment panel of the Staffing Committee interviewed the shortlisted candidates. The appointment panel was comprised of a politically proportional panel of five members.

#### **4. PROPOSAL**

- 4.1. The appointment panel of the Staffing Committee has unanimously recommended that Linzi Roberts-Egan be appointed Chief Executive.
- 4.2. In arriving at their decision, the appointment panel considered the evidence gathered from all aspects of the selection process in the context of the criteria for the role.
- 4.3. Members of the Cabinet not involved in the selection process have confirmed that there are no objections to the proposed appointment, a process required by law.

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Key stakeholders have been engaged in the recruitment process and the outcome of those discussions were shared with the appointment panel as set out in the body of the report.

#### **6 IMPLICATIONS**

##### **6.1 Finance, Value for Money and Risk**

- 6.1.1 Finance have been consulted on the appointment and salary costs of the role will be met from within existing budget provision.

##### **6.2 Legal**

- 6.2.1 Every Council is required to appoint a person to the role of Head of Paid Service. Article 12 of the constitution designates that this role is undertaken in Waltham Forest by a Chief Executive who is the most senior member of the employed staff.
- 6.2.2 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (the Regulations) set out the requirements for the appointment of senior staff and the relevant provisions of the

Regulations are contained in the Council's Employment Procedure Rules, which are set out in Part 8 of the Council's Constitution. The appointment of Head of Paid Service is a Council decision as set out in its' Terms of Reference at Part 7 of the Council's Constitution. The Council may only make or approve the appointment of the Chief Executive where no well-founded and material objection has been made by any member of the Cabinet. There has been no objection made by any member of the Cabinet.

6.2.3 The Council has the power to appoint such officers as it considers necessary for the proper discharge of the Council's functions by virtue of s.112(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

6.2.4 S.7(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 stipulates that any appointments made by the Council must be on merit subject only to some exceptions concerning the Council's equality duties. The Council should, if challenged, be able to demonstrate that the successful candidate was the best candidate by objective reference to both the application and the interviews.

6.2.5 The Representation of the People Act 1983 (sections 8, 24, 28 and 35(3)) requires that the Council appoint an officer to be the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for local and parliamentary elections. This has traditionally been the responsibility of the Chief Executive.

### **6.3 Equalities and Diversity**

6.3.1 The appointment process is in accordance with the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure.

### **6.4 Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)**

6.4.1 There are no specific implications.

### **6.5 Council Infrastructure (e.g. human resources, accommodation or IT issues)**

6.5.1 There are no specific implications.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION (as defined by Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)**

None.