

**Body:** Council

**Date:** 13 January 2016

**Subject:** Appointment of Shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

**Report of:** Head of Organisational Development

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**Ward(s):** All

**Purpose:** To receive the recommendations of the Recruitment Panel, and confirm the appointment of an Eastbourne Borough and Lewes District shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

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**Recommendation:** **To approve the recommendation of the Recruitment Panel and confirm the appointment of Robert Cottrill as the Shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service for Eastbourne Borough Council and Lewes District Council on the agreed terms and conditions. This appointment is to take effect from Monday 18 January 2016.**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 At Cabinet meetings on 24 September 2015 (Lewes) and 21 October 2015 (Eastbourne), Members considered a Shared Services Outline Business Case, as set out in an independent report from the Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise (iESE). That report had been commissioned by both Authorities to set out the options for the development of shared services and wider integration between Lewes District Council (LDC) and Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC).
- 1.2 Both Cabinets agreed to adopt a strategy for the integration of services across both Councils, and authorised iESE to conduct a more detailed business case to include a project plan and implementation timetable.
- 1.3 The integration of services anticipates the early requirement for a single Chief Executive; this is also recommended by the iESE Shared Services Outline Business Case considered by the Cabinets. Accordingly, an early move to the

position of having singular leadership with clarity of purpose to take forward this significant programme of change is necessary, and with this in mind the Council Leaders of EBC (Councillor David Tutt) and LDC (Councillor Andy Smith) instigated a process to enable this to happen.

## **2.0 The Process**

- 2.1 Technical expertise and advice has been sought from a range of sources including the Monitoring Officers of both EBC and LDC, and the already shared Section 151 Officer. Independent HR advice and support has been provided by representatives of the East Sussex County Council HR team.
- 2.2 Each Council's Constitution contains relevant provisions for the appointment to the role of Head of Paid Service. EBC provides for the establishment of a Recruitment Panel (at least 6 councillors, nominated by the Group Leaders in accordance with the constitution). LDC provides for the establishment of an Appointments Committee (currently 7 councillors, nominated by the Group Leaders in accordance with the constitution). Accordingly, both of these groups were formed in order to deal with this process.
- 2.3 From within the nominated members of the above bodies, group leaders appointed a joint working sub-group comprising 3 members from EBC (Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Opposition) and 3 members from LDC (Leader, Deputy Leader, Leader of the largest Opposition Group). This Joint Working Sub-Group was an advisory only group which was initially set up to review and agreed a proposed salary and job description for the new role of Shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, prior to formal consultation commencing with the two current Chief Executives.
- 2.4 The new role of Shared Chief Executive is sufficiently similar to the roles that current Chief Executives occupy now, that both existing roles were in a 'ring fence' position, with the current incumbents eligible to express an interest. Confirmation was given that, in the event both current Chief Executives express an interest in applying, there would be a selection process consisting of an interview and presentation. It is of note that both post holders were previously recruited following external recruitment and a rigorous selection process.
- 2.5 Confirmation was also given that, as there is a reduction of one post, invitations were offered for current post holders to express an interest in voluntary redundancy. In the event one request for voluntary redundancy was received and accepted, the remaining employee would be appointed to the new Shared Chief Executive role, subject to recommendation to respective Full Councils from the LDC Appointments Committee and the EBC Recruitment Panel.

## **3.0 Consultation Outcomes**

- 3.1 The formal consultation process commenced on 16 November 2015 (Jenny Rowlands) and 18 November (Robert Cottrill), and both parties were asked for their comments on the proposals, including the salary and job description previously endorsed by the Joint Working Sub-Group, with a response

deadline of Monday 30 November 2015.

- 3.2 Arising from this consultation, both Chief Executives confirmed that they had no comments on the proposals. Jenny Rowlands also confirmed that she did not intend to apply for the new Shared Chief Executive role.

#### **4.0 Recruitment Panel and Appointments Committee Deliberations**

- 4.1 As required by the respective constitutions, the EBC Recruitment Panel and the LDC Appointments Committee both met (on 14 and 17 December 2015 respectively) to consider the matter. They received a report together with the consultation pack containing information about the salary considerations and benchmarking information regarding regional pay data. As a consequence, and in the knowledge that Jenny Rowlands did not wish to apply for the role, both bodies passed the following resolutions:

1. That the proposed salary and job description of the new role of Shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Services be approved.
2. That the redundancy situation for Jenny Rowlands be noted
3. That Full Council be recommended to confirm the appointment of Robert Cottrill as new Shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

**NOTE:** The full minute of the EBC Recruitment Panel is appended to this report.

- 4.2 The power to approve the appointment of Head of Paid Service sits exclusively with Full Council. The appointment of a joint Head of Paid Service will require the approval of both LDC and EBC Full Councils, voting as separate entities, on the recommendation from the separate LDC Appointments Committee and EBC Recruitment Panel. Thus, to make the appointment valid, both Councils will need to approve the appointment. An extraordinary meeting of the Full Council in Lewes is being held on 14 January 2016.
- 4.3 Legally binding contractual commitments relating to Jenny Rowlands are redundancy pay and 3 calendar months' notice. Jenny Rowlands has indicated a desire to work through the full notice period. As Jenny Rowlands did not wish to be considered for this post, formal notice of redundancy was given on 18 December 2015 (the day after the meeting of the LDC Appointments Committee) and, thus, employment will cease on 17 March 2016.

#### **5.0 Implications**

- 5.1 Financial – the main financial implication relates to the redundancy payment for Jenny Rowlands. This is a contractual payment which must lawfully be paid. In relation to the financial implications of the new Shared Chief Executive role, the estimated combined savings to Eastbourne Borough and Lewes District Councils is over £80,000 per annum.
- 5.2 Staffing – the implication of this process is the deletion of the two existing

Chief Executive roles, the creation of one Shared Chief Executive role, and therefore the redundancy of one employee.

- 5.3 Other – There are no equality or environmental implications arising from this report.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

- 6.1 Due process has been followed as required by the constitutions of EBC and LDC in respect of this matter. Both Councils are now required to confirm the appointment of a shared Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service to enable the transformation to wider shared services between EBC and LDC to proceed effectively.

**Becky Cooke**  
**Head of Organisational Development**

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