



Oversight and Governance

Plymouth City Council
Ballard House
Plymouth PL1 3BJ

Please ask for Jake Metcalfe
T 01752 668000
E democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk
www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy
Published 13 March 2025

Chief Officer Appointments Panel

Friday 21 March 2025
10.00 am
Council House

Members:

Councillor Evans OBE, Chair
Councillors Aspinall, Mrs Beer, Blight, Laing, Lugger and Stephens.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

For further information on webcasting, attending Council meetings and how to engage in the democratic process please follow this link - [Get Involved](#)

Tracey Lee
Chief Executive

Chief Officer Appointments Panel

1. **Apologies**

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Panel Members.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

3. **Minutes** **(Pages 1 - 4)**

The Panel will be asked to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2025.

4. **Chair's Urgent Business**

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

5. **Recruitment to role of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital:** **(Pages 5 - 14)**

6. **Recruitment to the role of Service Director for Education, Participation & Skills:** **(Pages 15 - 24)**

7. **Exempt Business**

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Part II (Private Meeting)

Agenda

Members of the Public to Note

That under the law, the Panel is entitled to consider certain items in private. Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

8. **Recruitment to role of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital:**

9. **Recruitment to the role of Service Director for Education, Participation & Skills:**

Chief Officer Appointments Panel

Friday 14 February 2025

PRESENT:

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillors Mrs Beer, Blight, Briars-Delve, Coker, Stephens and Ms Watkin.

Also in attendance: Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Chris Squire (Service Director HROD) and Jake Metcalfe (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 11.00 am and finished at 1.00 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the Panel will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

1. **Apologies**

There were apologies from:

- Councillor Laing, Councillor Coker substituted
- Councillor Aspinall, Councillor Briars-Delve substituted
- Councillor Lugger, Councillor Ms Watkin substituted

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting that took place on 13 December 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chairs urgent business.

5. **Recruitment to new role of Service Director for Adult Social Care**

Chris Squire (Service Director for HROD) presented the report to the Board and highlighted the following key points:

- a) A new post was being proposed within the chief officer structure which would report into the Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities post;
- b) The role would replace the role of Head of Adult Social Care and Retained

Functions;

- c) The Service Director role being proposed would handle one of the largest budgets of the Council and was essential in the planning of Health and Social Care planning in the city;
- d) A report would be taken to a meeting of Council for agreement.

The Panel agreed unanimously to:

- 1. Note the role profile for Service Director for Adult Social Care;
- 2. Approve the independent job evaluation of the role, procurement of an executive search agency, and preparation of recruitment materials for the recruitment of a permanent Service Director for Adult Social Care, subject to approval of the role by Full Council;
- 3. Note the indicative timeline for the creation and recruitment to this role.

6. **Recruitment to the role of Chief Operating Officer**

Chris Squire (Service Director for HROD) presented the report to the Board and highlighted the following key points:

- a) The Council had previously made two attempts to recruit for a Director of Resources role which were unsuccessful. The role covered the Section 151 responsibilities, but following feedback from the market, it was agreed to remove that delegation due to the difficulties in recruiting to the position;
- b) Subsequent to feedback from the market around removing the Section 151 responsibilities and the creating a Chief Operating Officer role. The Panel offered the role to a suitable candidate, who secured another chief officer post with Plymouth City Council;
- c) The Chief Operating Officer role was being covered in the interim by Jens Gemmel who had a positive impact of the organisation, but would not continue in the role on a permanent basis and the agreed contract length was coming to an end;
- d) The Panel were therefore being asked to agree to start the search for a permanent Chief Operating Officer, but would use a different search agency to search outside of local government.

The Panel agreed unanimously to:

- 1. Note the content of this report;
- 2. Agree to undertake a permanent recruitment process for the post of Chief Operating Officer;

3. Approve the procurement of an executive search agency, for the recruitment of a permanent Chief Operating Officer.

7. **Recruitment to the role of Strategic Director for Growth**

Chris Squire (Service Director HROD) presented the report to the Panel

The Panel agreed to:

1. Note the content of this report.
2. Undertake formal interviews for the post of the role of Strategic Director for Growth.

8. **Exempt Business**

The Panel agreed to pass a resolution under Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

9. **Confidential Minutes**

The confidential minutes from 13 December 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

10. **Recruitment to new role of Service Director for Adult Social Care**

This item was not discussed under part 2 of the meeting and was covered in part 1)

11. **Recruitment to the role of Chief Operating Officer**

(This item was not discussed and was covered in part 1 of the meeting)

12. **Recruitment to the role of Strategic Director for Growth**

Following an interview process, the Panel unanimously agreed to offer the role of Strategic Director for Growth to Glenn Caplin-Grey, subject to Cabinet approval and the necessary pre-employment checks.

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Chief Officer Appointments Panel



Date of meeting:	21 March 2025
Title of Report:	Recruitment to role of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital
Lead Member:	Councillor Sue Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR and OD)
Lead Strategic Director:	Jens Gemmel (Interim Chief Operating Officer)
Author:	Chris Squire (Service Director HROD)
Contact Email:	Jens.gemmel@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Click here to enter text.
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report updates Members on proposals for the recruitment to the new post of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital within the Council's senior management team and seeks approval to commence the process.

Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that the Chief Officer Appointments Panel

1. Note the updated role profile for the Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital;
2. Approve the independent job evaluation of the role, procurement of an executive search agency, and preparation of recruitment materials for the recruitment of a permanent Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital;
3. Approve commencement of the recruitment process for the post, dependent on the evaluation of the role.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Alternative options considered were to either leave this role vacant or to fill on an interim basis.

However, it is essential that the Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital is filled on a permanent basis, to enable the postholder to lead the organisation in delivering effective customer services through a prevention-first and digital-first approach. This dual focus ensures proactive, data-driven solutions are embedded across the Council, enabling early interventions that reduce service demand and deliver lasting value

The recommendation is in line with the Council's established practices and is offered as the best option in these particular circumstances. It is essential that the role is filled permanently as soon as possible to deliver these key responsibilities for the Local Authority and to support the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Plan

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Corporate Plan outlines the strategic direction of the Council. Recommendations within this report align to the current Plymouth City Council Corporate Plan

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

This role is a permanent position with established budget contained within the Medium-Term Financial Plan, and costs arising from this report can be contained within budget.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

It is the responsibility of all senior officers to ensure we develop and deliver our plans for both ensuring the Council is carbon neutral by 2030 and leading the City in carbon reduction.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council’s duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

All recruitment and selection processes will be undertaken with reference to Plymouth City Council’s established procedures and relevant legislation.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Role Profile							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Jens Gemmel (Interim Chief Operating Officer)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 11/03/2025											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Dann approved by email											
Date approved: 11/03/2025											

I. INTRODUCTION

The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) Regulations 1993 prescribe a number of actions when recruitment to a Chief Officer post is required. The definition of 'Chief Officer' for the purposes of these regulations refers to:

- The Head of Paid Service,
- The Monitoring Officer,
- The Section 151 Officer,
- A statutory Chief Officer (as defined by section 2(6) of the 1989 Act) and
- Non-statutory Chief Officers as defined by section 2(7) of the 1989 Act (which essentially include officers who report directly to the head of paid service): regulation 1(2) of the 1993 Regulations.
- A Deputy Chief Officer (those reporting to a Chief Officer)

There are a number of defined activities that must be undertaken, including:

- The creation of a document clearly stating the duties of the officer, what qualifications, experience and skills they will need to undertake the role (the role profile).
- Making arrangements for the post to be advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it.
- Providing a copy of the role profile to any person requesting this.

Once advertised as above, authorities will either interview all those who are qualified to undertake the role or select a short list of qualified applicants. If there are no qualified applicants, the local authority will then consider alternative arrangements.

2. CHIEF OFFICER APPOINTMENTS PANEL DELEGATED FUNCTIONS

Council has delegated the function of interviewing candidates to the Chief Officer Appointments Panel, (COAP). COAP acts with the delegated authority of the Council to appoint to Chief Officer roles where the law prohibits the Head of Paid Service from making the appointment but allows full Council to delegate the responsibility.

3. BACKGROUND

The role of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital has been held vacant on the senior management structure, pending permanent recruitment to the Chief Operating Officer role (which is ongoing). However, in light of our ambitious public sector reform agenda, it is essential that the role of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital is filled on a permanent basis. This will support the Council's drive for a 'Prevention-First' approach through the delivery of digital and data-driven approaches, enabling early intervention in addressing challenges that the City faces.

4. PERMANENT RECRUITMENT UPDATE.

While the role of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital is an existing role on the senior management structure, the role profile has been reviewed and updated and this is attached at Appendix A.

Because the changes are significant, it is necessary for it to be re-evaluated. It is anticipated that the role will be evaluated within Chief Officer Band 4 £85,023 to £118,213. Should the role be evaluated at anything other than Chief Officer Band 4, a further report will be provided to COAP and no further

recruitment activity will be undertaken, until all necessary approvals are in place.

On that basis, approval is now sought from Members of COAP to commence the work activities required in advance of launching the recruitment process to secure a permanent post holder. This will include:

- Submitting the role profile for independent job evaluation by Korn Ferry to determine the salary band
- Engaging an external executive search partner
- Preparation of recruitment materials.

We anticipate that suitably qualified and experienced candidates for this role are likely to be employed in similar senior roles requiring a three-month notice period, therefore it is important for the preparation required prior to advertising the role to commence as soon as possible. The interim Chief Operating Officer and Service Director Human Resources and Organisational Development will lead on the recruitment process with regular updates provided to Members.

5. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

It is anticipated that the role will be evaluated as Chief Officer Band 4 within the range of £85,023 to £118,213 per annum. Chief Officer pay is linked to national pay bargaining.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Appointments Panel:

1. Note the content of this report;
2. Approve the independent job evaluation of the role, procurement of an executive search agency, and preparation of recruitment materials for the recruitment of a permanent Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital;
3. Approve commencement of the recruitment process for the post, dependent on the evaluation of the role.

SERVICE DIRECTOR

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND DIGITAL



Grade and Tier	Chief Officer – Band 4	Reference:	COF0021
Reports to:	Chief Operating Officer	Job Type:	Strategic Leader

Role Purpose

The Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital will lead the organisation in delivering simple, inclusive, and trustworthy customer services through a prevention-first and digital-first approach. This dual focus ensures proactive, data-driven solutions are embedded across the Council, enabling early interventions that reduce service demand and deliver lasting value.

The postholder will implement a service design methodology to transform the Council into a user-led, insight-driven organisation, aligning digital innovation with preventative strategies to address root causes of demand. This requires leveraging AI, machine learning, and predictive analytics alongside integrated data systems to anticipate and meet customer needs, streamline operations, and support long-term resilience.

The role also holds strategic responsibility for managing Plymouth City Council's shared service contracts for IT and printing services, ensuring alignment with organisational goals, innovation, cyber security, and cost-effectiveness.

The role reports to the Chief Operating Officer and is part of the Customer & Corporate Services Directorate.

Statutory and Key Responsibilities/Accountabilities

Provision of statutory Libraries services (DCMS & Arts Council).

Key Responsibilities**Corporate and organisational**

- **Customer Experience Strategy:** Own and lead the Council's customer experience strategy, embedding prevention-first and digital-first principles into every aspect of service delivery.
- **Service Redesign:** Develop and implement a redesign framework that integrates prevention-focused enablers, including predictive analytics, integrated systems, and cross-departmental collaboration, to simplify services, improve inclusivity, and build trust.
- **Building Organisational Capability:** Equip teams across the organisation with the skills, tools, and confidence needed to adopt customer-focused behaviours, leveraging test-and-learn approaches and cross-functional collaboration to drive change.
- **Customer-Centric Decision-Making:** Champion the voice of the customer by embedding data insights, predictive models, and real-time feedback into decision-making processes to prioritise early intervention and meet diverse needs.
- **AI and Machine Learning:** Harness AI and machine learning to enable proactive, user-focused service delivery, enhancing the ability to predict and address demand before it escalates.

- **Integrated Data Platforms:** Leverage deep data systems that connect insights across departments, such as social care, housing, and health, to identify vulnerabilities, improve targeting, and enable coordinated responses.
- **Cultural Transformation:** Promote a digitally literate, prevention-focused culture across the organisation, equipping staff to adopt and maximise the benefits of new technologies.
- **Shared Services Governance:** Strategically manage DELT shared service contracts to ensure alignment with organisational priorities, driving innovation while maintaining operational security and resilience.

Performance and Finance

- **Prevention-Focused KPIs:** Define and monitor key performance indicators that reflect both prevention and digital goals, such as reductions in failure demand, increased early interventions, and cost savings through automation.
- **Value-Driven Transformation:** Ensure that digital initiatives and prevention strategies deliver measurable value for money, minimising costs while maximising community impact.
- **Optimising Resources:** Use predictive insights to allocate resources effectively, prioritising investments that deliver preventative outcomes and operational efficiencies.
- **DELT Contract Oversight:** Monitor the performance of the DELT shared service contract, ensuring it delivers cost-effective, high-quality, and innovative solutions.

Customer and Communities

- **Inclusive, Preventative Service Design:** Champion services designed to be accessible, equitable, and proactive, addressing the root causes of demand and providing alternative options for those digitally excluded.
- **Proactive Use of Data:** Leverage predictive analytics and community insights to identify service gaps, anticipate demand, and deliver preventative measures that reduce dependency on crisis services.
- **Personalised Engagement:** Deploy AI tools to create tailored customer experiences, offering proactive notifications, personalised recommendations, and real-time support.
- **Reducing Failure Demand:** Drive improvements in service quality and responsiveness by using integrated data to address systemic issues and prevent avoidable escalations.

Partnerships and external relationships

- **Collaboration for Prevention:** Partner with external organisations, including DELT, technology providers, and community stakeholders, to co-create prevention-first, digitally-enabled solutions.
- **Regional and National Engagement:** Represent the Council in forums to influence digital transformation and prevention strategies at a regional and national level.
- **Securing Investment:** Advocate for and secure funding to scale AI, data platforms, and prevention initiatives, ensuring sustainable delivery of innovative solutions.
- **Cross-Sector Alignment:** Work with public, private, and third-sector organisations to integrate digital and preventative priorities into community-wide strategies.

Governance

- **Compliance and Ethics:** Ensure adherence to legal, regulatory, and ethical standards, including GDPR, accessibility, and equality legislation, while embedding frameworks for the ethical use of AI and data.

- **Risk and Resilience:** Establish robust risk management processes for digital and preventative initiatives, ensuring challenges are identified and mitigated proactively.
- **Transparent Reporting:** Provide clear, evidence-based updates on digital transformation and prevention-first outcomes to senior executives, elected officials, and stakeholders.
- **Performance Management:** Lead governance of the DELT shared service, ensuring strategic alignment and delivery against agreed performance targets.

Role Accountabilities	Role Outcomes
<p>Corporate and Organisational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead the Digital & Customer Experience management team. ▪ Accountable for the development and delivery of strategy and performance across all Digital & Customer Experience departments, this includes ensuring that they align to the Council's Operating model. ▪ Accountable for the delivery of the Council's Digital Plan and ensure it is kept relevant and up to date. ▪ Accountable for leading and developing the Digital, Business Support, Libraries, and Transformation teams. <p>Performance and Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accountable for the delivery of the departmental budgets as aligned to the corporate plan. ▪ Ensure there is an appropriate performance framework in place to manage service performance and delivery objectives within department. ▪ Responsible for a range of services including those relating to Digital, Library Services, and Business Support. <p>Customer and Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensures services within own department are focused on continuous improvement within agreed levels of customer satisfaction to best meet the needs of internal and external customers and citizens. ▪ Ensure efficient processes and ease of use business focused support to customers. ▪ Facilitate a culture change programme to support the organisation's transition to a customer focused culture. <p>Partnerships and External Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create and manage effective relationships and partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders, building support amongst them in order to deliver better public services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieving measurable improvements in customer satisfaction through the integration of prevention-first and digital-first strategies. ▪ Demonstrating reductions in failure demand and reactive service costs by implementing predictive analytics and AI-driven solutions. ▪ Increasing adoption of self-service tools, ensuring accessibility and reducing operational inefficiencies. ▪ Delivering targeted cost savings through prevention-focused initiatives and intelligent automation, with clear ROI on digital investments. ▪ Meeting agreed performance outcomes for the DELT shared service, ensuring innovative, secure, and sustainable service delivery. ▪ Strengthening community trust and confidence in the Council's ability to use data and technology responsibly to address needs. ▪ Improving employee engagement and digital fluency, ensuring staff are equipped to support prevention and digital innovation agendas.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the city by supporting and participating in key corporate events. ▪ Build a consistent approach to leadership styles across the organisation to derive an empowered leadership culture. <p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver the statutory functions as stated in the role profile. ▪ Member of tactical command team for civil emergencies and business continuity in liaison with the police/other agencies as appropriate. Member of the out of hour's rota. Ensure the department is compliant with all statutory, regulatory, safeguarding and audit requirements, and where applicable, those of Ofsted, CQC, Health and Safety Executive and Information Security 	
Essential Qualifications and Experience	Essential Attributes and Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extensive senior leadership experience with a focus on customer experience, digital transformation, and prevention-first strategies. ▪ Proven track record of implementing AI, machine learning, and predictive analytics to drive measurable improvements. ▪ Strong background in managing complex shared service agreements and embedding preventative approaches into large-scale transformation. ▪ Experience delivering improvements within a project/programme management environment, meeting targets on time and within budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prevention-Focused Leadership: Demonstrated ability to embed prevention-first strategies into organisational operations, leveraging technology and data to reduce demand. ▪ Data Integration Expertise: Strong experience in creating and managing integrated data systems that support predictive insights and early intervention. ▪ AI and Machine Learning Knowledge: Proven success in using AI and machine learning to enhance service delivery, personalise experiences, and enable preventative approaches. ▪ Collaborative Leadership: Adept at fostering partnerships, aligning stakeholders, and driving a shared vision for prevention and digital transformation. ▪ Ethical Governance: Expertise in implementing frameworks to ensure the ethical, transparent, and compliant use of AI and data.

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Chief Officer Appointments Panel



Date of meeting:	21 March 2025
Title of Report:	Recruitment to the role of Service Director – Education, Participation & Skills
Lead Member:	Councillor Sally Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Haley (Director of Children’s Services)
Author:	Chris Squire (Service Director HROD)
Contact Email:	Chris Squire@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Click here to enter text.
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report updates Members on the permanent recruitment to the role of Service Director Education, Participation and Skills.

Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that the Chief Officer Appointments Panel

1. Note the content of this report.
2. Agree to undertake a permanent recruitment process for the post of Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills
3. Approve the procurement of an executive search agency to support this recruitment process.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Alternative options considered are to leave the role vacant or extend the current interim arrangements. These options have been rejected on the basis that it is essential to recruit permanently to this key role which is responsible for driving up education standards, providing access to learning and supporting learning needs. It is responsible for developing and maintaining strong relationships with educational providers in the City.

The recommendation is in line with the Council’s established practices and is offered as the best option in these particular circumstances. It is essential that the role is filled permanently as soon as possible to deliver a range of statutory duties for the Local Authority and to support the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Corporate Plan outlines the strategic direction of the Council. Recommendations within this report align to the current Plymouth City Council Corporate Plan.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The Service Director for Education Participation and Skills is a permanent role with established budget contained within the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Financial Risks

There are no financial risks associated with this proposal.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

It is the responsibility of all senior officers to ensure we develop and deliver our plans for both ensuring the Council is carbon neutral by 2030 and leading the City in carbon reduction.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

All recruitment and selection processes will be undertaken with reference to Plymouth City Council's established procedures and relevant legislation.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Role Profile							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Haley, Director of Children’s Services

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes

Date agreed: 11/03/2025

Cabinet Member approval. Councillor Cresswell approved by email

Date approved: 11/03/2025

1. INTRODUCTION

The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) Regulations 1993 prescribe a number of actions when recruitment to a Chief Officer post is required. The definition of 'Chief Officer' for the purposes of these regulations refers to:

- the Head of Paid Service,
- the Monitoring Officer,
- the Section 151 Officer,
- a statutory Chief Officer (as defined by section 2(6) of the 1989 Act) and
- Non-statutory Chief Officers as defined by section 2(7) of the 1989 Act (which essentially include officers who report directly to the head of paid service): regulation 1(2) of the 1993 Regulations.
- A Deputy Chief Officer (those reporting to a Chief Officer)

There are a number of defined activities that must be undertaken, including:

- The creation of a document clearly stating the duties of the officer, what qualifications, experience and skills they will need to undertake the role (the role profile).
- Making arrangements for the post to be advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it.
- Providing a copy of the role profile to any person requesting this.

Once advertised as above, authorities will either interview all those who are qualified to undertake the role or select a short list of qualified applicants. If there are no qualified applicants, the local authority will then make further arrangements.

2. CHIEF OFFICER APPOINTMENTS PANEL DELEGATED FUNCTIONS

Council has delegated the function of interviewing candidates to the Chief Officer Appointments Panel, (COAP). COAP acts with the delegated authority of the Council to appoint to Chief Officer roles where the law prohibits the Head of Paid Service from making the appointment but allows full Council to delegate the responsibility.

3. BACKGROUND

Reporting to the Director of Children's Services, the Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills (EPS) is a key role to drive up education standards, provide access to learning and support learning needs. It is responsible for developing and maintaining strong relationships with educational providers in the City including Higher Education, Further Education, Schools and Early Years settings. The role will lead the implementation of the Local Area SEND Improvement Plan and establish new ways of service delivery in an integrated multi-disciplinary locality model. In common with the Service Director for CYPF the role has a strong focus as a champion for vulnerable children, including access to and provision of Early Help across the Local Authority and wider partnership system.

Following a meeting of the Chief Officer Appointments Panel on 13 December 2024, Amanda Davis was appointed on an interim basis, for a 6 month period, with the option to extend for 3 months, subject to Cabinet approval. The previous permanent postholder resigned and left the Council at the end of January 2025.

4. RECRUITMENT TO PERMANENT POST

This paper proposes that Plymouth City Council commences the process to seek a permanent appointment to the Service Director for Education Participation and Skills.

It is also proposed that the Chief Officer Appointments Panel agree to the appointment of an executive search agency following a procurement process.

The permanent selection processes are likely to last a minimum of three months and will need to be closely managed to ensure a good candidate experience. Based on the likelihood that successful candidates will be required to give three months' notice (subject to negotiation with their employer), they may not be available to start employment with Plymouth City Council until September/October 2025.

Internal candidates would be able to apply for the permanent roles if suitably qualified and experienced. It is suggested that the interview process is supported by appropriate assessments and panels, including employees, service users, partner organisations as part of an assessment centre, prior to interviews by the Chief Officer Appointments Panel.

The current interim arrangements are in place for six months, but with an option to extend, subject to Cabinet approval, for a further three months should this be required.

5. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The permanent role is established on the Plymouth City Council Senior Management Structure.

The role is currently a Band 4 Chief Officer within the chief officer pay and grading structure and the salary is currently within the range of £85,023 to £118,213 per annum. Chief Officer pay is linked to national pay bargaining.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Appointments Panel:

1. Note the contents of this report;
2. Agree to undertake a permanent recruitment process for the post of Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills;
3. Approve the procurement of an executive search agency to support this recruitment process.

SERVICE DIRECTOR

EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND SKILLS



Grade and Tier	Chief Officer – Band 4	Reference:	COF009
Reports to:	Director of Children’s Services	Job Type:	Strategic Leader
Role Purpose			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead on the development and implementation of the Council’s strategy for learning, SEND and inclusion, skills and employability and inclusion and the partnership with educational settings and business for children, young people, citizens, families and communities. ▪ Enable Strategic Directors to focus on driving the Council’s overall objectives at a city, sub region, regional and national level. ▪ Communicate the vision of the Council and motivate and influence others to acquire this. <p>Member of the Federation for: People, Children’s and Public Health Directorates; encouraging best use of resources, avoiding duplication and silo working, facilitating knowledge transfer between the senior team.</p> <p>Statutory and Key Responsibilities/Accountabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic lead in ensuring the Local Authority performs its statutory functions as set out in relevant legislation, including a sufficiency of school places and acts as a champion for vulnerable children and their families. 			
Key Responsibilities			
<p>Corporate and Organisational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide strong, visible leadership and direction through compelling communication of the Council’s vision and values to own Department, Federation and wider where necessary ▪ Act as the principal policy and professional advisor on education, school improvement and performance, access to learning and learner achievement and skills matters within own Department and provide specific subject matter expertise and advice to Directors, Chief Executive and Members as required. ▪ Ensure own department delivers the policies set by elected members, ensuring all staff understand and act on the aims of the organisation, in order to meet the needs of the people of Plymouth ▪ Embed climate change actions across the functions of the Children’s Services department contributing to core reductions in support of the Council’s pledge to become carbon neutral by 2030. <p>Performance and Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take lead responsibility for the overall management of the Department, with particular reference to the development and implementation of the wider Education, Participation and Skills agenda ensuring the Council’s financial, human resources and other assets are planned, deployed and managed effectively to deliver the priorities. ▪ Ensure the department provides cost effective and efficient services for customers. ▪ Embed a positive, innovative culture, which responds effectively and efficiently to deliver an outstanding customer focused service with best in class policies and practices which respond continually to the changing internal and external environments. 			

Customer and Communities

- Contribute to the development of programmes of local engagement and communication within the city with stakeholders and local communities designed to promote the work of the Council and own Department and deepen the Council's understanding of those it exists to serve.
- Create an environment and culture that empowers and requires employees to work collaboratively and effectively across the Department, with the Directorate/Federation, organisation and with partners.
- Leads and challenges own direct reports to create continuous improvement and service delivery that is innovative, customer focussed and effective in delivering the Council's agreed outcomes.

Partnerships and External Relationships

- Develop and engage in mutually beneficial relationships with partners and, where appropriate, integration of service delivery, to successfully deliver expected outcomes and benefits for the City.
- Fulfil a proactive role at local, regional and if appropriate national level in promoting and advocating for the City and its communities to deliver improvements and opportunities for residents and businesses.

Governance

- Ensure the statutory duties of the Department are met in accordance with legislation, guidance and regulatory requirements.
- Ensure effective measures are in place to manage and mitigate risk to protect the liability of the Department (including civil contingencies).

Role Accountabilities	Role Outcomes
<p>Corporate and organisational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead the EPS Management Team ▪ Lead for ensuring the Local Authority performs its statutory functions as set out in relevant legislation, including a sufficiency of school places and champion for vulnerable children and their families. ▪ Lead and champion the Child Poverty Strategy. ▪ Develop and maintain strong relationships with educational providers in the City including Higher Education, Further Education, Schools, and Early Years settings. <p>Performance and Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accountable for the delivery of the departmental budgets as aligned to the corporate plan. ▪ Ensure there is an appropriate performance framework in place to manage service performance and delivery objectives within department. ▪ Accountable for the Dedicated Schools Grant and other passported funding to schools. <p>Customer and Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensures services within own department are focused on continuous improvement within agreed levels of customer satisfaction to best meet the needs of internal and external customers and citizens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Local Authority plays a strong role in driving up education standards, providing access to learning and supporting learning needs and fulfilling the Local Authority role as champion for vulnerable children and families ▪ Managers are provided with the right level of consistent advice and support and coached to deliver good people management practices. ▪ There is a collaborative approach to managing Trade Union/professional association and other relationships relating to employment matters. ▪ EPS workforce understand the Council's values, priorities and desired outcomes. There is demonstrable evidence of engagement and progress. ▪ The performance management framework is clearly communicated, implemented and monitored to ensure good performance is recognised, including appropriate monitoring and plans for prioritised improvement, including school improvement strategies and interventions. ▪ Performance is managed by outcomes and poor performance is addressed quickly. ▪ EPS has a long term financial strategy and plan (MTFP) which is clear and actively

- Ensure that vulnerable people's needs are being met in the City
- Ensure efficient processes and ease of use business focused support to customers.
- Facilitate a culture change programme to support the organisation's transition to a customer focused culture.

Partnerships and External Relationships

- Create and manage effective relationships and partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders, building support amongst them in order to deliver better public services.
- Promote the city by supporting and participating in key corporate events
- Build a consistent approach to leadership styles across the organisation to derive an empowered leadership culture.

Governance

- Deliver the statutory functions within EPS.
- The Council's obligation for safeguarding of vulnerable groups is reflected across all areas of service delivery.
- Member of Tactical Command team for civil emergencies and business continuity in liaison with the police/other agencies as appropriate. Member of the out of hour's rota.
- Ensure the Department is compliant with all statutory, regulatory, safeguarding and audit requirements, including, where applicable, those of Ofsted, CQC, Health and Safety Executive and Information Security.

communicated to CMT, Members and the wider departmental workforce. The revenue and capital budget is delivered within agreed tolerances.

- EPS is able to demonstrate how it is performing against a range of performance indicators. Action is taken if performance fails to meet required standards.
- Strong networks have been established in the region and the city has received demonstrable investment from a range of funding agencies, from partners, from grants.
- EPS services make a demonstrable contribution to Plymouth being recognised as a great place to learn and work because of the services it delivers.
- Front line services and improved outcomes for the community are efficiently delivered.
- Customer experience and satisfaction is improved and there are measures in place to demonstrate that. Clear plans are in place where satisfaction is low.
- Strong networks are established in the region to best maximise investment from a range of funding agencies/from grants/from partners.
- Key partnerships are developed which have delivered better outcomes for Plymouth's employees/citizens.
- Statutory functions are delivered, risks are mitigated and feedback is used to engender a culture of continuous improvement.
- Plans and training are in place and resourced to deal with a range of emergencies. Business continuity is in place.
- All EPS information is held securely, safely and in line with legal and statutory requirements.
- Effective measures are in place to manage and mitigate risk to protect the liability of the department and wider Council.
- Effective measures are in place to manage and mitigate risk to protect the liability of the department and wider Council. Feedback is used to engender a culture of continuous improvement

Essential Qualifications and Experience	Essential Skills and Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Substantial experience of leading and developing a successful system for education and learner achievement. ▪ Strong record of delivery and improvement of education attainment and school improvement strategies. Understanding of the Council's statutory responsibilities for learners, attendance, SEN provision and education delivery. ▪ Substantial experience of maintaining high safeguarding standards and understanding of systems to protect vulnerable groups. ▪ Strong record of delivery and improvement of whole system change and development of effective commissioning strategies. ▪ Evidential ability to have identified strategies for collecting and using market and client data to drive performance improvements and efficiency. ▪ Strong record of the involvement of service users in the design and determination of services within the relevant sectors ▪ Leadership experience in a culture change environment ▪ Experience of deploying commercial and transformational acumen within medium or large organisations. ▪ Experience of developing strategies and translating them into effective operational plans gained in a multi-disciplinary organisation. ▪ Experience in working effectively and impartially with elected members/senior board/executive members and in supporting democratic decision-making processes. ▪ A broad knowledge of public sector service delivery including direct delivery and commissioning of third party contracts / SLAs. ▪ Experience of engaging and involving communities to whom statutory or other services are provided. ▪ Proven experience of commissioning/delivering services to achieve quality and value for money for customers. ▪ Understanding of the principles of System Leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Able to be a collaborative system leader across council with focus on culture change and transformational leadership. ▪ Able to effectively manage and motivate a diverse team of employees, enabling them to deliver quality customer services. ▪ Able to translate complex strategies into what is required to deliver cultural, organisational and technological improvements. ▪ Able to work as part of a high functioning non siloed Directorate Team ▪ Able to translate vision, complex concepts, financial information, principles and practices into clear compelling organisational strategies and plans. ▪ Business planning skills - including analysing demand, priorities, trends and predicting future customer needs. ▪ Commercial acumen to be able to interpret and interrogate complex financial and other information. ▪ Ability to think innovatively to identify income generation opportunities/income streams in own Department in line with Council vision. ▪ Able to understand performance management systems and methods to drive continuous improvement for customers. ▪ Ability to influence, coach and mentor others to improve and build a high performance culture. ▪ Authentic and effective communication skills. ▪ Ability to challenge in a constructive manner, not afraid to tackle difficult behaviour and situations. ▪ Stakeholder management skills within the public and private sector. Ability to develop and maintain effective dialogue and develop trust with stakeholders including other Service Directors, Directors, CMT, politicians and partners who provide of key public services, to protect and promote the best interests of the city. ▪ Ability to deal with competing interests while maintaining effective working relationships and a productive work environment.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Experience of using a range of change management and transformation methodologies to deliver impactful organisational change at pace.▪ Experience of working and succeeding in complex partnership arrangements.▪ Experience of leading a multidisciplinary workforce to drive performance and a successful culture.▪ Experience of working within and promoting a health and safety and safeguarding culture.▪ Demonstrable commitment and experience of celebrating and valuing diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Advanced negotiation and influencing skills, with the ability to establish pragmatic solutions and agreed outcomes.▪ Political awareness and acumen.▪ Innovative and able to challenge traditional ways of doing things in a positive, constructive way.
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