

**Democracy and Governance**

Plymouth City Council  
Ballard House  
Plymouth PL1 3BJ

Please ask for Jake Metcalfe  
T 01752 668000  
E [democraticservices@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@plymouth.gov.uk)  
[www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy)  
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## Chief Officer Appointments Panel

Friday 15 August 2025  
1.00 pm  
Council House

**Members:**

Councillor Evans OBE, Chair  
Councillors Aspinall, Mrs Beer, Blight, Coker, Laing and Luggier.

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 - 6)**

The Panel will be asked to confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 03 July, 04 July and 11 July 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 the role of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital: (Pages 7 - 12)**

## **6. 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.

## **7. Recruitment to the role of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital: (To Follow)**

**Chief Officer Appointments Panel****Friday 11 July 2025****PRESENT:**

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillors Mrs Beer, Briars-Delve, Lawson, Lugger, Stephens and Stevens.

Also in attendance: Chris Squire (Service Director for HROD), Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth) and Jake Metcalfe (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 11.04 am and finished at 2.15 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 Stephens substituted
- Councillor Aspinall, Councillor Briars-Delve substituted
- Councillor Blight, Councillor Stevens substituted
- Councillor Coker, Councillor Lawson substituted

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of chairs urgent business.

**4. Recruitment to Interim Service Director for Street Services**

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

- a) The previous post holder for the Service Director for Street Services left the Council on 04 July;
- b) Expressions of interest were sought from the senior management cohort of staff for an interim Service Director for Street Services whilst considerations of the structure of the directorate were progressed;
- c) Two candidates were being put forward to the Panel for interview;

- d) The position of interim Service Director for Street Services would initially be for six months before looking to recruit to the permanent post.

The Panel agreed to:

1. Note the content of this report.
2. Approves recruitment to this role on an interim basis pending permanent recruitment
3. Undertakes formal interviews for the post of Interim Service Director for Street Services on an acting-up arrangement.

5. **Exempt Business**

The Panel agreed that 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.

6. **Recruitment to Interim Service Director for Street Services**

Following an interview process, the Panel agreed to appoint candidate Andy Sharp to the position of interim Service Director for Street Services subject to Cabinet agreement and the necessary pre-employment checks for a period of six months.

## **Chief Officer Appointments Panel**

**Friday 4 July 2025 and 07 July 2025**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillors Mrs Beer, Blight, Coker, Dann, Lowry and Lugger.

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

The meeting started at 10.00 am and was adjourned at 3.56pm. The meeting was reconvened on 07 July 2025 at 1pm and finished at 1.07pm.

*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 Lowry substituted
- Councillor Aspinall, Councillor Dann substituted

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of chairs urgent business.

### **4. Recruitment to the role of Chief Operating Officer**

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

- a) An extensive search and selection process had taken place in which a search agency were asked to also look for candidates within the private sector;
- b) There had been two previous recruitment processes for the Chief Operating Officer role which were unsuccessful;
- c) Three candidates were selected for interview following completion of the assessment centre.

In response to questions raised it was reported that:

- d) References for candidates are used to supplement the recruitment process;
- e) The assessment centre was reported to be very rigorous and candidates go through a number of different stakeholder events;
- f) The successful candidate would be required to go through a six month probationary period.

The Panel agreed to:

- 1. Note the content of this report;
- 2. Undertake formal interviews for the role of Chief Operating Officer.

5. **Exempt Business**

The Panel agreed that 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 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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

*The Panel adjourned for further discussions at 3.56pm and the meeting would be re-convened on 07 July 2025 at 1pm.*

*Councillors Coker, Dann and Lugger did not return to the meeting following the adjournment.*

Following an interview process, the Panel agreed to appoint candidate Si Bellamy to the position of Chief Operating Officer subject to Cabinet agreement and the necessary pre-employment checks.

## **Chief Officer Appointments Panel**

**Thursday 3 July 2025**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Aspinall, in the Chair.

Councillors Mrs Beer, Blight, Coker, Lugger and Penberthy.

Also in attendance: Chris Squire (Service Director for HROD), Gary Walbridge (Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities), Jake Metcalfe (Democratic Advisor) and Hannah Chandler-Whiting (Democractic Advisor).

The meeting started at 10am and finished at 3pm.

*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.*

### 36. **Apologies**

Councillor Lugger proposed Councillor Aspinall as Chair for the meeting which was seconded by Councillor Blight.

The Panel agreed unanimously to appoint Councillor Aspinall as Chair for the meeting.

There were apologies received from:

- Councillor Evans OBE, Councillor Penberthy substituted
- Councillor Laing

### 37. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 38. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting that took place on 20 June 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

### 39. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chairs Urgent Business.

### 40. **Recruitment to Service Director for Adult Social Care**

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

- a) The position of Service Director for Adult Social Care was a new position within the Senior Leadership Team which was agreed by Council on 17 March 2025;
- b) The new position replaced the previous position of Head of Adult Social Care and Retained Functions;
- c) The role would be responsible for the largest budget in the Council and was also important in relation to influence within Plymouth;
- d) A thorough search and selection process took place with three being put forward to the Assessment Centre;
- e) The assessment centre activity included discussions with Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Gary Walbridge (Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities), Senior Leadership Team panel, Staff panel and an external panel;
- f) Candidates also undertook written and financial exercises as well as psychometric tests;
- g) Two candidates were put forward to the Panel for interview.

The Panel agreed to:

- 1. Note the content of the report;
- 2. Undertake formal interviews for the post of Service Director for Adult Social Care.

41. **Exempt Business**

The Panel agreed that 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 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

42. **Recruitment to Service Director for Adult Social Care**

Following an interview process, the Panel agreed to offer the role of Service Director for Adult Social Care, to Julia Brown subject to Cabinet approval and the necessary pre-employment checks.

43. **Confidential Minutes**

The confidential minutes of the meeting that took place on 20 June 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

# Chief Officer Appointments Panel



Date of meeting: 15 August 2025

Title of Report: **Recruitment to 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: Tracey Lee – Chief Executive

Author: Audrey Freeman (HR Culture Partner)

Contact Email: [Tracey.lee@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:Tracey.lee@plymouth.gov.uk)

Your Reference:

Key Decision: No

Confidentiality: Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

This report highlights the request for Members to undertake formal interviews for the post of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital.

## Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that the Appointments Panel:

1. Note the content of this report;
2. Undertakes formal interviews for the post of Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital.

## 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 advisable 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/ experience and accelerate our approach to digital and AI. 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:

The Service Director for Customer Experience and Digital is a permanent role with established budget contained within the Medium-Term Financial Plan. Further information relating to financial implications are contained within the body of the report.

### Financial Risks

There are no financial risks arising as this appointment falls within existing budget.

### Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

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

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

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

### Appendices

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

### Background papers:

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:

Fin	ITG.2 5.26. 050	Leg	LS/00 00339 1/14/L B/04/ 08/25	Mon Off	N/A	HR	AM2508 05	Asset s	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Tracey Lee – Chief Executive

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report.

Date agreed : 04<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR and OD

Date approved by email: 6 August 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 suitable and qualified applicants. If there are no suitable 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**

As highlighted in the report of 21 March 2025, 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.

The role has been through independent evaluation and has been confirmed as Chief Officer Band 4.

## **4. PERMANENT RECRUITMENT UPDATE.**

Having received approval to recruit to the role at the Chief Officer Appointments Panel on 21 March 2025, an executive search partner was engaged, with a number of candidates being presented for consideration.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an assessment centre on Monday 11 August 2025. Those candidates who are deemed to be suitable following that process will be invited to the Chief Officer Appointments Panel scheduled for 15 August 2025.

A supplementary pack, containing CVs and supporting statements will be forwarded to the Panel prior to that Chief Officers Appointment Panel.

## **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 £87,744 to £121,966 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. Undertake formal interviews for the role of Service Director for Customer Experience & Digital.

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