

Chief Officer Appointments Panel



Date of meeting:	09 September 2022
Title of Report:	Children's Directorate Senior Management Update
Lead Member:	Councillor Charlotte Carlyle (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Children and Young People)
Lead Strategic Director:	Sharon Muldoon (Director for Children's Services)
Author:	Sharon Muldoon (Director for Children's Services)
Contact Email:	Sharon.muldoon@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Click here to enter text.
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report provides an update for Members on Senior Management resources within the Children's Services Directorate.

Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that the Appointments Panel:

- I. Approve the commencement of activity for the recruitment of a permanent Service Director.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The recommendation put forward 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 to ensure the ongoing delivery 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 Children, Young People and Families 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

Full costs of any proposal will be available to Members ahead of any commitment of resources. There will be appropriate scrutiny by the Council's section 151 Officer.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

It is the responsibility of all senior officers to develop and deliver plans for both ensuring the Council is carbon neutral by 2030 and leading the City in carbon reduction. Being digitally enabled will be a significant contributor enabling the Council and City to work, connect and behave differently in the future. In respect of the recruitment process, steps will be taken to ensure that where meetings can be undertaken virtually this is done to reduce travelling time, costs and associated carbon implications. Minimum use of printing and paper will be encouraged.

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

The Service Director for Children, Young People and Families is accountable for the provision of statutory children's services as specified in legislation including Children's Act 2004, Crime & Disorder Act, Legal Aid Sentencing & Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, Youth Justice Plans/functions, Education & Inspections Act and also acts as the 'Caldicott Guardian' for children's services. They are the lead officer for corporate parenting.

Any recruitment and selection processes will be undertaken with reference to Plymouth City Council's established procedures and any 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
A	Role Profile Service Director Children, Young People and Families							

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:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Sharon Muldoon, Director of Children's Services

Date agreed: **01/09/2022**

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

Cabinet Member approval: **Verbally with Director of Children's Services**

Date approved: **02/09/2022**

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

The current Service Directors for Children, Young People (CYPF) has tendered their resignation to the Director of Children's Services and the post will be vacant from 5 November 2022. This is a key role within Plymouth City Council and a member of the Council's senior leadership team. The role reports to the Director of Children's Services.

The Service Director for CYPF is accountable for a range of statutory and non statutory services which impacts on the life chances of some of the city's most vulnerable citizens and their families. The post also has a leading role in delivering the wider vision for social care, combating social exclusion, corporate parenting and the continued improvement of opportunities for care experienced young people, including care leavers.

There is statutory guidance which instructs a large part of the activities undertaken in this area. A professional social work qualification and registration with Social Work England are required.

A copy of the role profile is attached at Appendix A.

4. RECRUITMENT TO POSTS

Senior recruitment processes can take at least three months and need to be closely managed to ensure a good candidate experience. Before the recruitment process commences, a review of the content of the role profile will take place to ensure it is still current and reflects the organisational needs of the council.

The Council's current recruitment and selection policy and guidance notes provide reference information to ensure that recruitment processes and activities are fair and equitable. A briefing covering recruitment and selection will be offered to new panel members ahead of any recruitment activity commencing.

Service Director CYPF

This is an attractive role for experienced and social work qualified candidates looking for their next career move within an ambitious local authority with a clear focus on improvement and practice excellence. It is therefore proposed that this role is recruited to externally with an advertisement commencing shortly after the Appointment Panel on 9 September if approved. The process will follow the established processes, however in this case the services of an Executive Search Agency is not proposed in the first instance. An ambitious timetable is planned to ensure that if there are no candidates identified by the closing date, an Executive Search Agency, interim or other options can be tabled to Members in October 2022.

An indicative timeline is shown below:

9 September	COAP – initial paper outlining proposals
12 September	External Advertisement opens,
23 September	COAP – a verbal update will be provided
2 October	Advertisement closes
w/c 3 October	Candidates are longlisted (Officers)
w/c 10 October	Candidates undertake technical assessments and psychometrics
w/c 17 October	Assessment Centre (virtual) including Children's and Peer/Partner Panels, written and financial exercises, 1:1 with Portfolio and Shadow Portfolio holders, 1:1 with DCS.
21 October	COAP - Candidates are interviewed

5. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

This is an established role with an associated budget. The role is a Band 4 Chief Officer within the Chief Officer pay and grading structure. The salary is currently within the range of £78,219 to £109,505. Chief Officer pay is linked to national pay bargaining and no increase has as yet been announced for the financial year 2022/2023.

Benchmarking has commenced to ensure advice is available about current market rates for the role ahead of any appointment to the permanent role. Benchmarking will also provide an indication of the current market rates for interim appointments if these are required. Not using an Executive Search Agency will save circa £23,000. There will be some costs for external technical assessments.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Appointments Panel:

- I. Approve the commencement of activity for the recruitment of a permanent Service Director for Children, Young People and Families.