

Chief Officer Appointments Panel



Date of meeting:	02 June 2023
Title of Report:	Children's Directorate Senior Management Update
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing
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 updates Members on proposals for interim recruitment to a senior post in the Children's Services Directorate pending permanent recruitment to the role.

Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that the Appointments Panel:

1. Note the action taken so far to source interim candidates for the role of Service Director for Children, Young People and Families and approve interim recruitment to this post.
2. If suitable candidates have been identified, to interview these on 2 June 2023.

Alternative options considered and rejected

This 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.

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 ensure we develop and deliver our plans for both ensuring the Council is carbon neutral by 2030 and leading the City in carbon reduction. Digital will be a significant contributor to enable 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. The minimum of printing and paper will be used with use of email, virtual and other media being used where possible.

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 relevant legislation.

Appendices

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Service Director Children, Young People and Families Role Profile							

Background papers:

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	DJN. 23.2 4.27	Leg	EJ/1 115/ 24.5. 23(2)	Mon Off	Click here to enter text.	HR	2505 23ka b	Asset s	Click here to enter text.	Strat Proc	Click here to enter text.
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Sharon Muldoon, Director of Children's Services											
Date agreed: 24/05/2023											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report											
Date agreed 24 May 2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Cllr Jemima Laing, CYPFS PFH – email of 24 May 2023											
Date approved: 24/05/2023											

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.

The 2001 Regulations require, in the case of the S151 Officer, that appointment be done by full Council or a committee to who Council delegates the responsibility.

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 Director for Children, Young People and Families has recently tendered her resignation to the Director of Children's Services. Discussions continue to confirm a final date of service.

This is a key role within Plymouth City Council and a member of the Council's senior leadership team. Reporting to the Director of Children's Services, the role is accountable for a range of statutory and non statutory services impacting on the life chances of some of our most vulnerable citizens and their families. The post also has a leading role in delivering the wider vision for social care, combating social exclusion and corporate parenting as well as the continued improvement of opportunities for care experienced young people, including care leavers. There is statutory guidance which instructs a large part of the activity undertaken in this area. A professional social work qualification and registration with Social Work England are required.

4. RECRUITMENT

It is critical that this role is covered by a suitably qualified and experienced service leader. This ensures that statutory services and that risk around child protection and the safety of children, young people and their families receives appropriate oversight. As well as driving improvement alongside the current Improvement Board, Children's Services Directorate is shortly to commence a period of consultation on the implementation of a new Target Operating Model (TOM) and accompanying staffing structure

which will require significant input from this post holder.

Rather than immediately move to permanent recruitment to the role, it is felt more appropriate to engage an interim for up to 12 months. This will facilitate a period of stability pending the implementation and embedding of the new TOM.

Members will be updated and authorisation sought ahead of the commencement of any recruitment activity to the permanent role.

In view of the need to ensure adequate cover and secure candidates, interim candidates have started to be sought via the corporate contract with Matrix SCM and Members are likely to interview suitable candidates at the Chief Officer Appointment Panel on 2 June 2023.

5. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The established 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 £82,949 to £115,330. Chief Officer pay is linked to national pay bargaining. Benchmarking and review of current market rates and proposed day rates for interim appointments will be undertaken and information provided to Members ahead of any appointment.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Appointments Panel:

1. Note the action taken so far to source interim candidates for the role of Service Director for Children, Young People and Families and approve interim recruitment to this post.
2. If suitable candidates are identified, to interview these on 2 June 2023.