

Chief Officer Appointments Panel



Date of meeting:	16 February 2024
Title of Report:	Update on the recruitment to the role of Service Director Children, Young People and Families
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Haley (Strategic Director of Children's Services)
Author:	Chris Squire (Service Director HR-OD)
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Your Reference:	Click here to enter text.
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report updates Members on progress towards the permanent recruitment of the Service Director Children, Young People and Families.

Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that the Chief Officer Appointments Panel

1. Notes the content of this report.
2. Undertakes a further recruitment process for the post of the role of Service Director for Children, Young People & Families

Alternative options considered and rejected

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 Children, Young People and Families is a permanent role with established budget contained within the Medium Term Financial Plan

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. 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:

** 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	Briefing report title							

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: 05/02/2024

Cabinet Member approval: *[electronic signature (or typed name and statement of 'approved by email/verbally')]* Cllr Laing approved by email

Date approved: 05/02/2024

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 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 2 June 2023, the previous permanent Service Director for Children, Young People and Families resigned from their post and subsequently left the Council in July 2023. At that time, COAP were advised that rather than immediately move to permanent recruitment to the role, it was felt more appropriate to engage an interim for up to 12 months pending the implementation and embedding of the new Target Operating Model. An interim Service Director of Children, Young People and Families was appointed by the COAP in June 2023.

This is a key role within Plymouth City Council and a member of the Council's senior leadership team. Reporting to the Strategic 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 led the delivery of the children's social care improvement plan in response to the Ofsted Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in January 2024 and 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. PERMANENT RECRUITMENT UPDATE.

An executive search partner was engaged via the Council's preferred supplier Matrix. While the role was advertised during September/October 2023, and a number of candidates considered, regrettably none were regarded as being suitable. The search was extended and two candidates were interviewed by the Chief Officer Appointments Panel on 19 January 2024. No appointment was made from that recruitment process.

It is therefore proposed that the search is resumed with the support of an executive search partner to identify further suitable candidates.

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 £82,949 to £115,330 per annum. Chief Officer pay is linked to national pay bargaining.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Chief Officer Appointments Panel:

1. Note the content of this report.
2. Undertake a further recruitment process for the role of Service Director for Children, Young People & Families