

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment and Staffing Committee held on  
Wednesday, 7 November 2018 at 4.00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Henry Batchelor – Chairman  
Councillor Dawn Percival – Vice-Chairman

**Councillors:** Dr. Claire Daunton Philippa Hart  
Peter Topping

**Officers:** Patrick Adams Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Beverly Agass Chief Executive  
Susan Gardner Craig Head of People and Organisational Development  
Rory McKenna Deputy Head of Legal Practice

Councillor John Williams was in attendance, by invitation.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Sarah Cheung-Johnson and Mark Howell.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 September 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

### **4. APPOINTMENT OF SECTION 151 OFFICER**

The Press and Public were excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act).

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented the report on the need to appoint a Section 151 Officer. It was noted that the current postholder was leaving at the end of the year and under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council was required to have a Section 151 Officer, as it was a statutory role.

#### **Consideration of a shared post**

In response to questioning, the Head of People and Organisational Development explained that the Council had considered creating a shared post with another authority, but this had been rejected, as it was considered necessary to appoint a full-time officer to this position due to the amount of work involved. This included the signing off of the accounts, the preparation of the budget, the overseeing of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the implementing of the new financial management system.

#### **Consideration of appointing a new permanent officer**

In response to questioning, the Chief Executive explained that the Council needed a new Section 151 Officer in post by the beginning of next year, which meant that there was insufficient time to recruit a permanent member of staff, who would probably have to

give up to three months notice. It was noted that the proposed length of appointment was for 6-12 months to take account of the outcome of an organisational review and that the Council planned to start the recruitment process for a permanent officer as soon as possible during this period.

**Consideration of the applicant**

The Committee noted that Mr Robert Palmer was suitably qualified and had previously held the position of Section 151 Officer at Epping Forest District Council. He came recommended by the East of England Local Government Agency and had excellent references. It was noted that the offer of appointment would include a suitable notice period.

The Employment and Staffing Committee

**NOTED**

- A)** That the individual who currently holds the role of S151 Officer has resigned.
- B)** That the Council needs to act swiftly to put into effect interim arrangements and resource so that a handover and smooth transfer of knowledge is achieved before the current postholder leaves the Council.

The Employment and Staffing Committee unanimously

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** the appointment of Mr Robert Palmer as Interim S151 Officer with effect from 1 January 2019.

**5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee agreed that its next meeting should be held on Friday 7 December at 10am.

---

**The Meeting ended at 4.30 p.m.**

---