



REPORT TO: Council

21 May 2020

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Bridget Smith, Leader

LEAD OFFICER: Liz Watts, Chief Executive

APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Purpose

1. To recommend to Council, the appointment of Anne Ainsworth as Chief Operating Officer for South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Recommendations and Reasons

2. Appointments Panel were convened to undertake the recruitment process. The panel unanimously recommends that Council:
 - (a) Approve the appointment of Anne Ainsworth as Chief Operating Officer for South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - (b) Notes that a provisional offer of employment has been made, subject to two exemplary references, health clearance and eligibility checks in accordance with the Council's policies. The necessary references have been received.
 - (c) Agrees that the appointment commence on a date to be mutually agreed.
 - (d) Agrees that the salary to be offered is £103,000 which is within the Council's salary range for this post as set out in the Pay Policy Statement (£92,035 to £108,275 per annum).
 - (e) Confirms that the appointment will be subject to a 6-month probation period.
3. The above recommendations are made by Appointments Panel following:
 - a national recruitment campaign,

- robust candidate assessment of experience, skills, capability and, organisational alignment
 - Initial screening discussions with Penna and the Chief Executive
 - psychometric/personal profile tests (Wave Professional Styles, Hogan Development Survey, Leadership Judgement Indicator)
 - assessment centre comprising two panels – Partners, Staff
 - Formal interview process carried out by the Appointments Panel.
4. The Appointments Panel were presented with detailed feedback at the end of each stage of the selection process.
 5. At the end of the process Anne Ainsworth demonstrated that she has the necessary experience, skills and strong leadership capability as well as clear alignment to the organisational priorities and values. Anne Ainsworth proved to be the lead candidate and received the highest scores from all panels and interviews.
 6. The Appointments Panel unanimously recommend to Council that Anne Ainsworth should be offered the post of Chief Operating Officer. Details of her background and career history are attached as **Appendix A**.
 7. In accordance with the Council's Officer Employment Procedure Rules and Regulations introduced under the Local Government Act 2000, all Members of the Cabinet have been informed of the Appointments Panel's recommendation.

The Leader has confirmed to the Interim Corporate Director and the Council's Legal Officer that the Cabinet has no objection to the proposed appointment.

Background

Appointment of Chief Operating Officer

9. On the 14 November 2019, the Employment Committee gave consideration to the proposed new senior management structure and the addition of a new post of Chief Operating Officer. Following a period of formal consultation, the structure was agreed and recruitment to the post commenced. The Council engaged Penna to support this process.
10. It agreed to form an Appointments Panel consisting of:
 - Cllr Henry Batchelor
 - Cllr Mark Howell
 - Cllr Bridget Smith
 - Cllr Hazel Smith
 - Cllr Aiden Van de Weyer

Cllr Henry Batchelor was elected as Chair of the Appointments Panel.

Due to the national situation with COVID19 some Members utilised Skype for the interviews.

11. The salary scale for the role of Chief Operating Officer is £92,035 to £108,275 per annum. There is no other remuneration for this role. This is in accordance with the Council's Pay Policy Statement.

12. Julie Towers from Penna plus a small team of Penna consultants provided assistance at all stages including advertising, executive search, initial long-list screening.
13. A process of executive search and a national advertising campaign produced an excellent response. Long-listing selection produced a final shortlist of 5 candidates.
14. Candidates completed psychometric tests (Wave Professional Styles, Leadership Judgement Indicator).
15. On 18 March 2020 five shortlisted candidates went through a rigorous assessment process, this included three panel interviews with staff, partners and members of the Appointments Panel.
16. The members of the Appointments Panel who participated in the assessment and selection process, having regard feedback from partner and staff panels, and taking account of the final interview scores, were unanimous in recommending that ANNE Ainsworth be offered the position of Chief Operating Officer.

Considerations

17. The Chief Operating Officer is a key role in working with elected members, the Chief Executive and senior management to shape and deliver the Business Plan priorities for this Council.

Background Papers

Local Government and Housing Act 1989
The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001
Relevant Employment Law

Report Author: Susan Gardner-Craig
Interim Corporate Director

Telephone: (01954) 713285