

Committee: Appointments Committee

Date: 21st January 2021

Agenda item:

Wards: All

Subject: Appointment to the post of Chief Executive

Lead officer: Liz Hammond, Interim Head of HR

Lead member: Chair of Appointments Committee and Leader of the Council

Key decision reference number:

Exempt or confidential report

The following paragraph of [Part 4b Section 10 of the constitution](#) applies in respect of information given in appendix 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of this report and they are therefore exempt from publication:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

Members and officers are advised not to disclose the contents of these appendices.

Recommendations:

- A That the Committee notes the current job description and person specification but agrees that the chosen executive search agent will be asked to work with officers to finalise the job description to use for the campaign and to delegate approval of the final document to the Acting head of Human Resource in consultation with the Chair of the Appointments Committee.
 - B That the Committee decide which executive search agent to use for the recruitment campaign depending on the track record and approach to attracting BAME candidates proposed by each supplier.
 - C That the Committee agrees to establish a sub-committee for the purposes of agreeing a shortlist of candidates and to act as the interview panel for the final interview.
 - D. That the Committee approves the general recruitment process as outlined in 2.6 and delegates the decision as to which candidates to longlist, which technical assessor to use for the preliminary interviews, which stakeholders to invite on the stakeholder interview panel and which psychometric profiling to undertake, to the Acting head of Human Resources in consultation with Chair of the Appointments Committee..
 - E To agree to recommend to Full Council at its meeting on 3 February that the Council offer a salary in the Chief Executive salary range of £181,332 - £201,741 per annum is necessary.
 - F Purpose of report and executive summary
- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Committee to approve the current job description and person specification but to note that the chosen head hunter will

be asked to work with us to finalise the job description to use for the campaign and to delegate approval of the final document to the Chair of the Appointments Committee.

- 1.2 In addition, the Committee is asked to decide which of the four executive search head hunters should be asked to support this recruitment process.
- 1.3 Thirdly, the Committee is asked to establish a sub-committee for the purpose of agreeing the shortlist of candidates to proceed to the final interview stage.
- 1.4 The Committee is finally asked to recommend that Full Council the proposal to advertise the post of Chief Executive with the salary range of £181,332 - £201,741 per annum,

2. Details

- 2.1 The job description and person specification for the post of Chief Executive (Appendix one) are to be agreed, but to note that the chosen executive search agent will be asked to work with us to finalise the job description to use for the campaign and to delegate approval of the final document to the Chair of the Appointments Committee.
- 2.2 Four specialist executive search agents have expressed their interest through the Local Government Resourcing Partnership (LGRP) framework. A summary of their track record of recruiting to similar roles both in London and nationally and their approach to equalities and diversity can be seen at Appendix four (exempt from disclosure) and their full proposals can be found at the Appendices five to eight (exempt from disclosure). Recommendations on each supplier made at Appendix four (exempt from disclosure) are based upon their track record of recruiting to Chief Executive roles and also their experience of attracting BAME candidates. Recent equalities data shows that Merton lacks a diverse corporate management team in terms of ethnicity and therefore is not representative of the residents within our borough.
- 2.3 A proposed timetable for Appointment Committee decisions is attached (Appendix two).
- 2.4 The consensus from all four headhunters who have expressed their interest in supporting this appointment is that the Chief Executive vacancy be advertised with a salary range of £181,332 - £201,741 per annum. This is consistent with recent appointments within the market for chief executive level posts in London.
- 2.5 In addition, all four suppliers have advised that a pay offer of towards the top range of the salary may be required if an exceptional candidate is found but cannot be secured within the lower end of the salary range.
- 2.6 The full recruitment process will involve agreement of a longlist of candidates, who will then be put through a preliminary interview with a technical assessor. The technical assessor will be agreed by Interim Head of Human Resources in consultation with the Chair of the Appointments Committee after recommendations by the chosen head hunter. The recruitment process will then continue with agreement of a shortlist of candidates, who will then be put through psychometric profiling. This is standard practice for senior appointments. Shortlisted candidates will then be invited to the interview day, which will consist of a stakeholder interview, 1-1 meeting with the Leader of the Council, an informal lunch with members (if COVID lockdown and social distancing permits)

of the Corporate Management Team and ending with the final panel interview, who will make the final appointment decision.

- 2.7 The stakeholder panel will include representatives from a range of key partners, which will be decided in consultation with the Chair of the Appointments Panel.

3. **Financial, resource and property implications**

- 3.1 The costs of recruiting the Chief Executive can be found at Appendix three and are exempt from disclosure.

4. **Legal and statutory implications**

- 4.1 The recommendation contained within this report are designed to ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations to appoint staff on merit pursuant to the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. This means that the procedure should be capable of objective justification.
- 4.2 This post is covered by the Employee Procedure Rules (part 4H) of the constitution. The Appointments Committee or sub committee is responsible for making recommendations on the appointment of the the new Chief Executive post to full Council Once the recruitment process is completed in accordance with the Council's recruitment procedures an offer of appointment cannot be made by the Full Council until the Committee has notified the Leader of the name of the person to whom the Committee wishes to make an offer. The appointment will only be made where no material or well founded objections from the Leader have been received. Committee should therefore build this process into the recruitment planning.
- 4.3 In all other respects the process must comply with the Council's recruitment procedure.

5. **Human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications**

- 5.1 The contents of this report are designed to ensure that the Council's processes are human rights and equalities compliant.
- 5.2 It is unlawful to discriminate on grounds of gender, race, disability, age, religion and belief and sexual orientation. This refers to both direct and indirect discrimination. In effect the process has to be evaluated against three tests (1) intention (2) method (3) effect. Where there is an **intention** to discriminate on any of the prohibited grounds, this would be unlawful. Where there is no such intention but the recruitment **methods** used are discriminatory, then the outcome may be open to challenge. Where the intention and method are sound but the **effect** is shown to have disproportionate effect on a particular category of applicant then the outcome may be open to challenge.
- 5.3 Committee is invited to satisfy itself that the procedures operate as designed. Committee should therefore be satisfied that the advertisement and shortlisting and appointment criteria are objective in order to assist in objective justification of the final decision.

6. **Risk management and health and safety implications**

- 6.1 None

7. Appendices – the following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report

- 7.1 Appendix one: job description and person specification
- 7.2 Appendix two: proposed time table
- 7.3 Appendix three: Costs (exempt from disclosure)
- 7.4 Appendix four: summary of proposals (exempt from disclosure)
- 7.5 Appendix five: proposal from supplier 1 (exempt from disclosure)
- 7.6 Appendix six: proposal from supplier 2 (exempt from disclosure)
- 7.7 Appendix seven: proposal from supplier 3 (exempt from disclosure)
- 7.8 Appendix eight: proposal from supplier 4 (exempt from disclosure)

8. Background Papers – the following documents have been relied on in drawing up this report but do not form part of the report

- 8.1 None

9. Contacts

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10. Useful links

- 10.1 Merton Council's Web site: <http://www.merton.gov.uk>
- 10.2 Readers should note the terms of the legal information (disclaimer) regarding information on Merton Council's and third party linked websites.
- 10.3 <http://www.merton.gov.uk/legal.htm>
- 10.4 This disclaimer also applies to any links provided here.

Appendix one – job description and person specification

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

JOB DESCRIPTION

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Responsible to – Leader of the Council

ROLE

1. To work in partnership with Members to provide leadership, vision and strategic direction to the Council.
2. To lead, inspire and manage the Corporate Management Team to deliver the Council's vision, values and objectives, ensuring that all resources are used effectively in a co-ordinated approach to delivering excellent customer services to residents.
3. To be an ambassador for the Council and to represent and negotiate on behalf of the Council with external bodies.
4. To be the Council's Head of Paid Service.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Leadership and Vision

- 1.1 Work in partnership with Members to determine the corporate culture of the Council and guide, support and advise Members on the development and implementation of Council's policy.
- 1.2 Provide decisive leadership for the organisation, establishing a clear model of leadership, pursuing the vision, strategic goals and priorities of the Council.

- 1.3 Inspire a culture of continuous development and act as a role model to inspire all employees to promote the values of the Council and present a positive image to the community.
- 1.4 Drive commercialism and an entrepreneurial and effective commissioning culture, with effective systems and processes across the whole Council.
- 1.5 Act as an ambassador for the Council, building external relationships, including partnership working within the Borough (e.g. police, voluntary sector, health) to enhance our reputation, ensuring that the organisation is well regarded, contributing fully to local, sub-regional, regional and national partnerships to best effect.
- 1.6 To deliver efficiency and value for money and sound financial management.
- 1.7 Undertake the lead role in the Council's emergency planning arrangements and the London Wide Local Authority Gold arrangements.

2. **Management**

- 2.1 Inspire and shape the organisation to deliver effective and efficient services through a framework of performance management.
- 2.2 Promote learning and development and support a performance management culture.
- 2.3 Lead and develop the Corporate Management Team to ensure that all resources are deployed effectively to deliver on the Council's vision and objectives.
- 2.4 Promote the development of effective policies in response to the changing demands imposed by legislation, government intervention and service demands.

3. **Partnership**

- 3.1 Foster effective partnership arrangements with both internal and external stakeholders.
- 3.2 Establish effective working relationships with the Leader of the Council and all Members.

4. Member Relations

- 4.1 Act as principal adviser on policy and ensure Members are able to formulate and determine policy in a way consistent with the effective, financially prudent and legal administration of the Council.

5. Service Delivery

- 5.1 Ensure that all service delivery is customer focused and delivered within a framework that supports valuing diversity, inclusion and access.
- 5.2 Provide a framework within which to challenge service provision ensuring that effective and efficient services are delivered to the community.
- 5.3 Provide good value for the community with efficient and effective cost effective services, through maximising resources, incorporating best practice and utilising new technology and innovation.
- 5.4 Ensure that service delivery is supported by a comprehensive performance management system that tracks the implementation of corporate priorities and objectives.

6. Valuing Diversity

- 6.1 Champion valuing diversity and equal opportunities ensuring that Merton embraces a culture that promotes full and equal access to learning, employment services and cultural life.
- 6.2 Promote the Council's commitment to valuing diversity and providing equal access to service delivery, ensuring that all residents and service users are treated with fairness, equity and respect.
- 6.3 To provide the leadership, communication and action, which will exemplify the Council's values, sense of purpose and commitment to ensure equality of opportunity and strengthen cohesion in the local community.
- 6.4 Ensure the Council's commitment to equality of opportunity for all employees within a culture of fairness, equity and respect is achieved through the effective implementation of policies.

7. **Political Management**

- 7.1 Work with political understanding and sensitivity. Promotes a culture of political awareness that helps translate political will into appropriate future strategies.

8. **Marketing**

- 8.1 Act as a pro-active ambassador for the Council, creating the mind set for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements, promoting and marketing a positive image of the Council and the Borough as an attractive business partner and as a place within which to live and work.

9. **Other**

- 9.1 Carry out duties as may be reasonably required.
- 9.2 Undertake all duties in accordance with Council policies and statutory obligations.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications

1. Educated to degree level with evidence of continuing personal development.

Background and Experience

1. A proven track record of success at senior management level (although not necessarily as Chief Executive) within a local authority or a large organisation.
2. Sound knowledge and experience of financial management and information systems within a large, complex organisation.
3. A track record of demonstrable success in change management, managing a diverse range of services and translating organisational ambitions into real achievements and service delivery improvements.
4. Successful track record of establishing a strong performance culture, effective performance and service quality evaluation that involves users and driving up standards and performance.
5. Proven experience of establishing effective working relationships with multi-cultural communities and dealing with issues of diversity.
6. A successful track record in resolving internal conflict within a complex environment.
7. A proven track record of implementing effective, innovative strategy in a large, multi-disciplinary environment.
8. Proven experience of promoting positive images, both internally and externally, of a large organisation.

9. A successful track record of building effective, sustainable and meaningful relationships across diverse sectors and interests and successfully bringing together coalitions of diverse interests to agree and deliver a clear vision and strategies.

Personal Qualities

1. Highly motivated, enthusiastic and an excellent communicator.
2. An effective manager with an approachable style.
3. Committed, robust and resilient enough to work within a challenging and complex environment.
4. A team worker who can build partnerships, work effectively across boundaries and achieve performance and results through others.

Personal Style and Behaviour

1. Well developed leadership skills.
2. Personal and professional credibility.
3. Open-minded adaptable.
4. Resilient and persuasive.
5. High levels and energy and commitment.
6. A high level of political judgement.
7. A high degree of probity and integrity.
8. An innovator and forward thinker.
9. An excellent communicator.
10. Objective and outcome focused.

Appendix two – overview of recruitment timetable

Detailed Briefing Meeting	w/c 8 th February after the Appointments Committee on 21 st January and Full Council on 3 rd February
Preparing the adverts, JD's and microsite	Ongoing
Job Advertised and Search goes live	w/c 15 th February (advert in MJ 18 th February)
Closing date	w/c 26 th March
Longlist Meeting	End w/c 29 th March
Preliminary Interviews	w/c 5 th April or w/c 12 th April carried out by executive search agent
Shortlist meeting	w/c 19 th April
Final Panel and Assessments	w/c 26 th April or 3 rd May
Full Council confirm appointment	19 th May

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