

Appointments Etc Panel

Thursday, 8 February 2018, 12.30 pm,

Present:

Minutes

Mr M J Hart, Mrs L C Hodgson, Mrs F M Oborski,
Mr A C Roberts and Mr C Rogers

Available papers

The Agenda papers (previously circulated), a copy of which will be attached to the signed Minutes.

1143 Named Substitutes

Mr Rogers was substitute for Mr Hardiman.

1144 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were received from Ms P Hill and Mr I Hardiman.

1145 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of this meeting be circulated to Members of the Panel and be signed by the Chairman in the light of any comments on their accuracy received within 7 days of their circulation.

1146 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED: that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item as is likely that exempt information relating to any individual will be disclosed and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

1147 Assistant Director Education and Skills

The Director of Children, Families and Communities outlined the contents of the report which asked the Panel to reconsider options for recruitment to the post of Assistant Director (Education and Skills). Currently the Assistant Director (Education and Skills) was being covered by Nick Wilson on an interim basis, in order to provide clear leadership in the important education and skills arena.

On 19 October 2017 the Appointments etc. Panel confirmed Mr Wilson's appointment and extended it until the arrival of a permanent postholder, anticipated at that time to be the end of April 2018. However, circumstances had changed and it was now recommended that Mr Wilson continued in the post until the end of March 2019.

Given the current competitive market for high calibre candidates for the role, careful consideration must be given to the recruitment campaign, which included the shape of the role including the salary, the search process, the candidate field and the selection process. The Council's chosen search partner had indicated that the agreed salary range for the role was unlikely to attract an existing Assistant Director calibre person to this post should the Council choose to advertise at the rate previously agreed for the post.

In the meantime, work was continuing on a full options appraisal and implementation plan for an Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) for parts of the directorate with the Assistant Director (Education and Skills) sitting on the ADM working group(s).

By 31 March 2019 an alternative delivery model should have been chosen with the Council knowing the impact on all services in Children's Services, including Education. It was recommended that once a decision was made on the ADM, including the impact on Education and Skills and therefore any resultant impact there may be on the post of Assistant Director (Education and Skills), the Panel then consider recruiting to the permanent post at this stage in full consideration of the market position at that point.

Following a recent conversation with Mr Wilson, he had indicated that due to a change in his personal circumstances he would be prepared to consider extending his interim arrangements to continue to work in the role as interim Assistant Director (Education and Skills) pending permanent appointment. It was therefore felt appropriate to make the Panel aware of this latest information prior to commencing a full recruitment process.

A cost analysis and options appraisal had been undertaken which showed a slightly higher cost in retaining Mr Wilson compared to a permanent appointment. However, the advantages of continuing the interim arrangement were considered to be that Mr Wilson already understood the infrastructure and provided flexibility for the future ADM and ensured continuity of service during time of critical change.

Recruiting to the post on a permanent basis provided stability and certainty for staff and was a lower cost option if successful in recruiting. However, market insight

suggested the Council would struggle to recruit under this arrangement and may result in failed recruitment campaigns resulting in increased re-advertising costs. This option also provided limited flexibility based on future ADM work.

Having considered the options carefully, the Panel agreed that whilst the cost of retaining the interim role was higher over a 12 month period than recruiting to a permanent post, it would enable the Council to retain a highly skilled interim who had extensive experience at both a Director and Assistant Director level in addition to enabling the Council to maintain flexibility for the future alternative delivery model. It therefore agreed to extend Nick Wilson's interim contract until 31 March 2019.

RESOLVED that the Panel

- a) Agrees to the extension of the existing interim arrangements for Nick Wilson as Assistant Director (Education and Skills) until 31 March 2019; and**
- b) Authorises the Director of Children, Families and Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills, to make the necessary arrangements, including remuneration, for the extension as set out in the report.**

Chairman