

JOINT APPOINTMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Meeting - 16 May 2012

Present:

Mrs Darby, Mr Harding, Mr Jones, Mr Kelly, Mrs Plant, Mr Reed, Mr D Smith, Mr M Smith (Chairman) and Mr Spate

Also Present:

Mr Wertheim(CDC)

Apologies for absence:

Mr Burns-Green

14. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Appointments and Implementation Committee held on 4 April 2012 were agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

16. REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JOINT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The report before the Committee updated Members on the formal consultation with staff following approval of the proposed joint management structure. It outlined the consultation process that had been undertaken; presented the final versions of the Heads of Service job descriptions for comment; outlined the selection process for the joint posts; and, detailed the timetable.

Regarding the selection process and whether affected staff had had enough time to prepare, it was reported that external consultants had been utilised to facilitate the process. They had held an open session with affected staff, to coach them in interview techniques. One-to-one sessions had also been arranged to support those staff with the application process. The sessions had been well received. It was also noted that those staff concerned had been aware of the timetable for some time, allowing time to prepare. The draft application pack that would need to be completed had already been circulated.

It was noted that it was likely that there would be unsuccessful applicants. A flexible package of support options would be available for those individuals, ranging from support for a career change, to financial / pension advice.

It was possible that some unsuccessful applicants could be utilised to support the transformation process. However, this would depend on conversations with those individuals, and whether their skills would enhance the transformation process. The Chief Executive confirmed that there was capacity in the business case for such work. Similarly, the business case could stand the cost of staff exits if necessary. In terms of the financial implications, Members were advised that there was little difference between a compulsory or voluntary redundancy, though both authorities had individual redundancy policies. Independent HR advice had been taken.

The closing date for applications for the Heads of Service posts would be 23 May, and it would be clearer than where the risk areas were. Interviews with the Chief Executive, Directors and the external HR advisor would take place in week commencing 28 May. Members would be kept informed of progress as much as possible, and it was acknowledged that there would be sensitivities around any unsuccessful applicants. The appointments would subsequently be confirmed, with both authorities having Personnel Committees scheduled in early July to address any issues arising.

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The Committee proceeded to review each job description / person specification. The consultation had particularly raised issues around the location of Freedom of Information (Fol) in the structure. However, the Committee endorsed the proposed distinction between administering the Fol process - which would be a part of Business Support - and the legal expertise to advise on a minority of Fol requests, would be within the legal area.

Regarding the job description for the Head of Customer Services, it was agreed by the Committee that it needed to be clearly understood that the 'specific responsibilities' section relating to customer services, excluded planning administration. This reflected the situation at both authorities.

RESOLVED -

1. That the final job descriptions and person specifications for the Heads of Service posts, subject to the amendment above, be agreed.

In order to discuss Private Appendix 3 detailing the ring fence of staff invited to apply for Heads of Service posts, the Committee then went into private session.

AND RESOLVED -

2. That under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

It was confirmed that some of the Heads of Service posts might only have one applicant, and it was not known whether all ring-fenced staff would apply. The roles would be challenging, and working across two authorities required specific skills. The interview panel would need to be confident that the applicants had the ability to undertake the specified roles; the roles did not have to be filled from the list of ring-fenced staff. As such, it was possible that external recruitment could be required for some posts. In that circumstance, any individuals in existing interim Head of Service posts would be able to apply, in addition to any other internal staff, or external persons.

It was noted that the Joint Committee received regular reports monitoring the expenditure on the process, and that such expenditure remained minimal to date.

AND RESOLVED -

3. That the ring fence of staff invited to apply for the posts, as detailed in Private Appendix 3, be agreed.
4. That the selection process be agreed and that Officers proceed to external recruitment for any posts not filled at the end of the process.

17. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

In accordance with the timetable presented in the report, it was noted that the meeting scheduled for 30 May would no longer be required. The next scheduled meetings were therefore:

- Thursday 5 July 2012, at 6pm, at Chiltern District Council
- Thursday 26 July 2012, at 6pm, at South Bucks District Council

The meeting terminated at 6.40 pm