

Joint Committee Meeting - Interim Statutory Appointments Briefing Note

Questions have been raised on the report relating to the Interim Statutory Officer Recruitment. As a result of which the Technical Lead officer has provided the responses below. The Technical Lead will when this item is discussed take members of the Joint Committee through the various points.

1. A question was raised about what the position would be if the Shadow Council did not agree the recommended candidates put forward by the Joint Committees.

The Structural Change Order is clear that the Shadow Authorities must agree the designations to the Interim Statutory roles of Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer at their first meetings and not to do so would be a breach of that requirement. This process is the same as would apply to recommendations being made by a Senior Appointments Committee to Full Council.

2. Clarification was requested on the procedural issues relating to nominations for the appointment panel members. We are seeking nominations from each of the Councils (one from the County Council and one from each of the District Councils in the relevant areas). To provide clarity, it is suggested that Recommendation 2.2 be amended to:

The Joint Committee to accept one nomination from each of the member councils to act as interview panel members and agree that membership of the panel, with the other two members of each member council being named substitutes in the event that the main nominee is unable to attend.

3. Two aspects of the Job Description for the Head of Paid Service were queried.
 - a) Clarification of what a “relevant degree” would be. Members can agree that this is changed to “a degree or relevant professional qualification”
 - b) Whether experience as a Returning Officer is essential. The Structural Change Order states that:

Where, during the shadow period, a casual vacancy occurs in the office of councillor for Cumberland area and an election is required to be held in accordance with section 89 of the 1972 Act, (the Interim Head of Paid Service) to be the returning officer in accordance with article 21(12)(c) of the Cumbria Structural Change Order 2022.

However, the function of Returning Officer (RO) can be delegated and the RO can appoint one or more deputies to discharge all or any functions. The SCO does not change this

position which is set out in primary legislation under the Representation of the People Act (s.35 (4)).

On this basis Members have the option to change this to a desirable, rather than essential, criteria on the person specification and the assessment criteria.

A revised draft description, reflecting these proposed changes is appended to this note.

Interim Head of Paid Service

Draft Job Description

Purpose

To ensure the smooth continuance and delivery of the LGR Programme for the Cumberland Council area, enabling the successful transition to the new Council.

Key Responsibilities

1. Accountable for the delivery of the LGR Programme in Cumberland area, sitting on the LGR Programme Board.
2. Lead and manage the Cumberland Shadow Management Team including the Interim Chief Finance Officer, Interim Monitoring Officer.
3. Lead the development and delivery of the Implementation Plan for the Cumberland Council area, liaising with the County Council and other Shadow Authority to ensure continuity of the delivery of public services on and after 1 April 2023.
4. Build effective working relationships with Elected Members and senior officers within the constituent authorities and national policy makers.
5. Exert influence at the most senior levels across the constituent authorities when necessary to overcome potential barriers/issues to ensure the delivery of the Programme.
6. Represent the Programme in the Cumberland area through a visible presence and be responsible for regular and appropriate communications to constituent authorities, Government, Local MP's and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Local Government regarding the Programme's progress.
7. Establish options for potential operating models for the new Cumberland Council in consultation with the constituent authorities.
8. Where he or she considers it appropriate, prepare a report to the Shadow Authority setting out his or her proposal for:
 - The manner in which the discharge by the Shadow Authorities of their different functions is coordinated
 - The number and grades of staff required for the discharge of these functions
 - Organisation of the Shadow Authority's staff

- Appointment and proper management of the Shadow Authority's staff
9. Where, during the shadow period, a casual vacancy occurs in the office of councillor for Cumberland area and an election is required to be held in accordance with section 89 of the 1972 Act, to be the returning officer in accordance with article 21(12)(c) of the Cumbria Structural Change Order 2022. The Head of Paid Service can appoint one or more deputies to discharge any or all of the functions of the Returning Officer.

Person Specification

Qualifications

- A degree or relevant professional qualification.
- Evidence of work related continuing managerial and professional development.

Specialist Knowledge & Experience

- Substantial leadership and managerial experience and skills gained at a senior level, including contributing to the corporate management of an organisation.
- Track record of promoting, leading and managing change.
- Substantial experience of successfully working with Elected or Board Members on complex issues, and the ability to work productively and closely with Members, and provide clear advice on policy options.
- A successful track record in corporate performance management and participation in the formulation of corporate objectives, policies and strategies within a large multi-disciplined organisation with comparable scope, responsibilities, budgets and resources.
- Track record of operating strategically on corporate projects and policy development.
- The ability to think creatively and innovatively in developing, recommending and leading strategic initiatives and policies to assist in the achievement of organisational goals
- The ability to work corporately and manage resources effectively in a complex environment, including the ability to interpret and understand complex financial and budgetary information, and to negotiate and influence to direct resources
- Demonstrable experience of partnership working, including the ability to influence and lead corporate and multi-agency projects and initiatives effectively.

- Demonstrable experience of taking difficult or contentious decisions and the ability to constructively manage conflict
- In-depth knowledge and understanding of the statutory, policy, strategic and service delivery framework in which local government operates, and the major issues facing local government.
- Experience of influencing Government Departments and Ministers.

Personal Attributes

- A high degree of political awareness and sensitivity and commitment to working closely with all councillors, local organisations and communities
- Highly developed diplomatic skills, particularly in motivating, negotiating and persuading others outside the span of control, including partner organisations
- Actively promotes the need for change and acts as a role model for change.
- Positive, committed, adaptable, robust and confident approach.
- Ability to work under pressure and to motivate others to work quickly, without undue stress, and demonstrate a duty of care.
- Innovative and creative approach to change.
- Personal integrity.
- Drive and self-motivation – “can do” attitude.
- Sound judgement in devising and evaluating options and dealing with complex issues.