

LICENSING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

3 September 2020

Minutes of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee meeting held remotely on Thursday 3 September 2020 at 6:30pm.

Committee Members present: Councillors A.S. Mier (Chairman), S.J. Coleman (Vice-Chairman), R.K. Bird, G.S. Browne, T.J.C. Byrne, G.C. Curtis, B.J. Drayson (ex-officio), Mrs D.C. Earl-Williams, K.M. Field, Mrs. E.M. Kirby-Green (substitute), C.A. Madeley (substitute), R.B. Thomas and H.L. Timpe.

Other Members present: Councillors J. Barnes, C.A. Bayliss, Mrs V. Cook, P.C. Courtel, A.E. Ganly, P.J. Gray, C.R. Maynard, D.B. Oliver (Leader), Mrs S.M. Prochak (Deputy Leader), G.S. Stevens and J. Vine-Hall.

Advisory Officers in attendance: Assistant Director Resources, Human Resources Manager and Democratic Services Officer

Also Present: 26 members of the public, via the YouTube live broadcast.

LG20/10. **MINUTES**

The Chairman was authorised to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee held on 13 July 2020, at a later date, as a correct record of the proceedings.

LG20/11. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G.S. Browne, K.M. Harmer and Mrs S. Hart.

It was noted that Councillor Mrs E.M. Kirby-Green was present as a substitute for G.S. Browne and C.A. Madeley was present as substitute for Councillor K.M. Harmer.

LG20/12. **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest.

LG20/13. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (EXEMPT INFORMATION)**

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded whilst matters containing exempt information, as prescribed by Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended and relating to Minute LG20/14 was under consideration. Appendix D submitted in connection with this item and which contains information exempt from

publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act shall remain confidential if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

LG20/14. SENIOR STAFF RESTRUCTURE

Members received the report of Cabinet which outlined a proposal to establish a single Chief Executive and to delete the two posts of Executive Director (ED).

Given the current fragility of Council finances following COVID-19, the uncertainties of a potential local government reorganisation and the heavy levels of change and transformation programmes underway, it was proposed to ringfence recruitment to this new post to within the two EDs, who currently undertook Head of Paid Service responsibilities and for the successful candidate to be appointed on a one year contract in the first instance. It was Cabinet's intention that a report be brought before Full Council in one year's time to consider whether that appointment be made substantive, or whether, at that stage, the Chief Executive (CE) post should be opened up to external competition and would review the position in the context of the needs of the authority, as well as being better able to judge the prospects for the future of Rother District Council.

All matters pertaining to the restructure were delegated to the Licensing and General Purposes Committee (L&GP) who were also invited to consider matters relating to the salary for the first year and the framework of potential severance terms for the other ED, both for recommendation to Full Council.

A draft Job Description and Person Specification were attached to the report for consideration, together with UNISON's response to the Cabinet report.

Competitive salaries for strategic CEs of District Councils in the South East were within the range of £110,000 to over £135,000 (not including car allowance or on costs). For an internal appointment, it was recommended to consider the bottom of the range; it was noted that the top of the current ED range was £102,000 and a lift of 10-15% would acknowledge the greater accountability and therefore a salary of around £115,000 for the first year was recommended in the report.

Members were advised that the salary of the new CE of £115,000 with on costs would be to the order of £155,000; the gross saving of deleting the two ED posts and replacing with one CE post would be around £111,000 per annum.

Only one ED had indicated at that stage that he wished to compete for the post, therefore the confidential Appendix D to the report contained the maximum benefits and costs of severance for the other ED only, provision for which would need to be made from the Revenue Reserve.

Cabinet had agreed that iESE (Incremental, Innovation and Inventing Public Services) assist in establishing a Behaviour Framework for the post and for implementation more widely throughout the Council, to progress Performance Management.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and the following points were noted from the discussions:

- Members were concerned about the impact of creating a strategic CE post freed of day-to-day management responsibilities, particularly during the current pandemic, on Council staff and services;
- the new CE would be responsible for any further staff reorganisation;
- Members raised concerns about staff morale at the current time;
- Cabinet had agreed at their meeting in March 2020 that costs for services received from iESE would be met from the Medium Term Financial Plan Revenue Reserve. The Assistant Director Resources advised that to date, no payments had been made; and
- the Chairman and other Councillors thanked the EDs for their long and loyal service and all Council staff for their hard work during the current difficult times.

RECOMMENDED: That, subject to the results of consultation with the two Executive Directors and their representative body ALACE and more widely the observations by trade unions and employee representatives:

- 1) delete both Executive Director posts;
- 2) establish a new post of strategic Chief Executive as set in the Job Description attached (Appendix A);
- 3) the appointment to this new post be ringfenced to the two existing Executive Directors;
- 4) the appointment be made on a one year initial basis at a salary of £115,000;
- 5) a severance package for the departing Executive Director as considered in Exempt Appendix D, be agreed;
- 6) the costs of the redundancy be met from the Medium Term Financial Plan Earmarked Reserve;
- 7) subject to the agreement of full Council to the above, the new structure to take effect from 28 September 2020; and
- 8) the Council's pay policy statement be amended accordingly.

(The Confidential Appendix D in relation to this matter, as set out at Agenda Item 7 was considered exempt from publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive

Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 the press and public were excluded whilst considering this matter).

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 7:13pm.