



# REPORT TO EMPLOYMENT PANEL

## PORTFOLIO AREA: GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES

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**Date of Meeting:** 18 August 2011

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Public

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### Inside Policy Framework

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**Title:** TCCE Recruitment 2011 – Employment Panel Support  
**Report of:** Personnel Manager  
**Report reference:** RD. 35/11

#### **Summary:**

This report sets out options for consideration by the panel with regard to arrangements to support the Employment Panel in recruiting a Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

#### **Recommendations:**

To:

- consider the report
- determine what support arrangements the Panel feels appropriate (as outlined in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.4)
- determine which of the optional selection activities they wish to employ as outlined in paragraph 3.

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**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: Report: None**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Following the recent resignation of the current Town Clerk and Chief Executive, the Employment Panel agreed interim arrangements to cover the position while a permanent post holder was recruited.
- 1.2 This report discusses potential options for supporting the Employment Panel during the permanent recruitment exercise.
- 1.3 Some approximate costs have been included but these can only be indicative until the exact scope of the exercise has been determined by Members and the work sourced.

## **2 OPTIONS**

- 2.1 **OPTION 1:** Engage a specialist recruitment agency to provide full support to the panel. Assistance can be in a variety of ways, to suit the Panel's wishes, and is discussed in paragraph 3.

- 2.1.1 The advantages of arrangement would be:

- It will bring specialist and expert knowledge to the exercise
- It should be seen as independent and impartial
- It is what many applicants expect at this level (although some authorities are ceasing to do this at present)
- Less internal resources will be required (although some will still be required to provide information, co-ordination etc).

- 2.1.2 The disadvantages of this arrangement would be:

- Costly – agencies typically charge 33% of salary plus advertising costs
- Given the cost, is likely to send out the wrong signals to employees and the public
- Applicants have no contact with the Authority until the later stages of the process.

- 2.2 **OPTION 2:** Use a mix of an external recruitment agency and in-house resources whereby all of the administration is handled in-house and the external agency provides advice and assistance to the panel.

- 2.2.1 The advantages of this type of arrangement would be:

- It will have all of the advantages as for the first option and outline in paragraph 2.1.1 but will be a little cheaper
- Applicants have some contact with officers at the Authority
- It is easier to provide information on aspects relating to conditions of service and 'how Carlisle does things' than if the exercise was conducted entirely externally.

2.3 OPTION 3: Use North West Employers' Organisation to provide advice and assistance to the panel, with the administration and organisation being provided in-house (including design and production of the advert and applicant information pack). This is similar to the option discussed in paragraphs 2.2 but will be cheaper as the only charges will be for any Assessment Centres, any in-depth work on salaries, attendance at meetings with the Panel and in-house contact(s), attendance at interview. Any other work carried out is provided as part of the subscription paid by the Council. Actual costs would depend on work done but will be within a reasonable estimate for this type of work and at such a level that the Council's contract procedures are not engaged (i.e. require a competitive process to be entered into for the appointment of an advising company).

2.4 OPTION 4: Carry out the exercise entirely in-house

2.4.1 The advantage of this arrangement would be:

- It would be cheaper
- Applicants have direct contact with officers of the Council
- It is easier to provide information on aspects relating to conditions of service and 'how Carlisle does things' than if the exercise was conducted entirely externally.

2.4.2 The disadvantages of this arrangement would be:

- It is not what candidates expect at this level
- While officers would always provide professional and impartial advice to Members, this is an area where it may be felt to be inappropriate for officers to be so closely involved with decisions about the person who will be their future boss, especially if there are any internal applicants
- Resource intensive.

### **3 SUPPORT ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE TO THE PANEL**

3.1 Irrespective of where the support is obtained from, the following activities can be provided to support the recruitment exercise. Some are obviously optional and are for Members to determine whether or not they wish those particular selection activities to form part of the exercise.

- Assistance in reviewing the job description and person specification
- Advice on the suitability of salary level (optional)
- Draft and design of adverts and any supporting documentation, and on where to place adverts
- Responding to enquiries and applications
- Conduct an Executive Search to ensure that suitably interested people are aware of the vacancy (optional)
- Prepare a report for panel to use for long listing (optional) and short listing e.g. drawing up a list of applicants with a brief summary of their 'match' to the person specification
- Advise on and carry out some form of Assessment Centre to assist with the short listing decisions and/or interview decisions (optional)
- Attend interviews to support the Panel
- Providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants
- All administration relating to the exercise.

### **4 COSTS**

4.1 Accurate costs are difficult to assess until the Employment Panel determines what it wants. However, in addition to the costs of using an external agency or North West Employers Organisation, there are also advertising costs which will obviously depend on the media used. Indicative costs range from £3,000 to £6,000 for the daily press and £ 2,000 - £3,000 for the local Government press.

### **5 TIME SCALES**

5.1 The time scale for the exercise depends on which support Panel selects (i.e. if the external support requires a tender process) and the selection activities they wish for (i.e. a long list and short list stage or just short listing). To give Members a 'feel' for the length of the process, two approximate time scales are given, one the longest likely and one the shortest possible. The reality is likely to be between the two.

## 5.2 Longer timetable

This assumes that a mini tender exercise is required and that Panel selects a long list, followed by a short list for assessment.

18 August:	Employment Panel decision
23 August:	Tender Documents sent
7 September:	Closing date for tenders
Week beg. 26 September:	Employment Panel meets to select successful company
Week beg. 16 October:	Advert placed
4 <sup>th</sup> November:	Closing date for applications
Week beg. 20 November:	Employment Panel meets to determine long list
Week beg. 18 December:	Employment Panel meets to determine short list
Week beg. 3 <sup>rd</sup> January:	Assessment Centre and Interviews
10 Jan or 6 Feb:	Employment Panel decision recommended to Council
Early April or May:	Start date for any applicant who is required to give 3 months' notice

## 5.3 Shortest possible timetable

This assumes that the Panel opts for a mix of NWEO and in-house support and that only a short list is drawn up.

18 August:	Employment Panel decision
1 <sup>st</sup> September:	Advert placed
16 <sup>th</sup> September:	Closing date
Week beg. 9 <sup>th</sup> October:	Panel meets to draw up short list
Week beg. 24 <sup>th</sup> October:	Assessment Centre and Interviews
8 November:	Panel recommends decision to Council
Mid February:	Start date for any applicant who is required to give 3 months' notice

## 6 **IMPLICATIONS**

- Staffing/Resources – this report considers the appointment of the Head of Paid Service. The resources required for the exercise are indicated in the report.
- Legal – any staff recruitment process should be open, transparent and fair. In determining which (if any) recruitment specialist is used, it will be necessary to determine an estimate of the value of the contract and carry out any

appointment in accordance with the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules if the relevant thresholds are reached.

- Financial - the costs of the recruitment exercise will be dependent upon the options chosen and would require precise costs to be calculated once that decision is made. However, any costs would need to be met from existing budgets and would need to be mindful of virement limits and Executive approval should they exceed £35,000.
- Corporate – the issues discussed support the appointment of a Town Clerk and Chief Executive and, as such, has significant corporate implications.
- Risk Management – the issues discussed in the report are intended to minimise risks to the Council.
- Equality Issues – the appointment process discussed is in line with good equality and diversity practices.
- Environmental – none.
- Crime and Disorder – none.
- Impact on Customers – none.

## 7 IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Equality Impact Screening	Impact Yes/No?	Is the impact positive or negative?
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age	No	
Disability	No	
Race	No	
Gender/ Transgender	No	
Sexual Orientation	No	
Religion or belief	No	
Human Rights	No	
Social exclusion	No	
Health inequalities	No	
Rurality	No	

## 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Members are recommended to

- consider the report
- determine the support they require to carry out the recruitment and selection to the post of Town Clerk and Chief Executive, as discussed in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.4

- determine the selection activities they wish for, as discussed in paragraph 3.

Jean Cross  
Personnel Manager