

3 July 2023

Our Ref Employment Committee/11 July 2023
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillors Elizabeth Dennis (Chair), Keith Hoskins (Vice-Chair), Ian Albert, Raj Bhakar and David Levett

Substitutes: Councillors Amy Allen, Ruth Brown, Terry Hone and Daniel Wright-Mason

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

MEETING OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

to be held in the

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON
ROAD, LETCHWORTH, SG6 3JF**

On

TUESDAY, 11TH JULY, 2023 AT 10.00 AM

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson
Service Director – Legal and Community

****MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING****

Agenda **Part I**

Item		Page
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Members are required to notify any substitutions by midday on the day of the meeting. Late substitutions will not be accepted and Members attending as a substitute without having given the due notice will not be able to take part in the meeting.	
2.	NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
3.	CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chair of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
4.	RECRUITMENT TO TEMPORARY ROLE OF SERVICE DIRECTOR HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REPORT OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR	(Pages 5 - 14)
	This report sets out the background to the process for recruitment thus far and the recommendations for the temporary Service Director Housing and Environmental Health post.	
5.	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC To consider passing the following resolution: That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following report will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).	

**6. RECRUITMENT TO TEMPORARY ROLE OF SERVICE DIRECTOR
HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH - PART 2
REPORT OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR**

15 - 28

This report sets out further information on the recruitment to the role of temporary Service Director Housing and Environmental Health and the recommendation of the Head of Paid Service on the appointment to the role.

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EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE
11 July 2023

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: RECRUITMENT TO TEMPORARY ROLE OF SERVICE DIRECTOR
HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

REPORT OF: MANAGING DIRECTOR

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITY: PEOPLE FIRST

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out the background to the process for recruitment thus far and the recommendations for the temporary Service Director Housing and Environmental Health post.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the Employment Committee interview the candidate for the role.
- 2.2. That the Employment Committee note the content of this report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. The details of the recruitment process and performance of the applicants are set out in the part 2 report. This report sets out the background.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. Prior to commencing the recruitment exercise to identify a temporary Service Director Housing and Environmental Health, discussions were undertaken with the Leadership Team on the requirements for additional resources to deliver services and how any identified funding could best be utilised. A number of options were discussed with this role seen as a priority. Cabinet at its meeting on 14 March 2023 approved the use of £140k of salary budget carry-forward for additional Service Director capacity for an 18 month period.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1. The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and Leadership Team were consulted as part of the considerations in paragraph 4.1 above and the approach was supported.
- 5.2. In order to comply with legal and constitutional requirements, Executive Members will need to be notified of any proposed appointment following a decision of the Committee, prior to an appointment being confirmed.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1. This report does not contain a recommendation on a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. At the Council budget meeting on 23 February 2023 the following resolution was passed: "Council notes the staff resourcing issues that the Council faces, particularly in relation to planning and the strategic implementation of the Local Plan, and notes that Cabinet and the Head of Paid Service will look at options to make use of available resources (such as carry forward of unspent salary budgets) to support the delivery of key Council functions and priorities." Cabinet at its meeting on 14 March 2023 approved the use of £140k for additional Service Director capacity to deliver existing Council priorities. It was agreed to create an additional fixed-term role (around 18 months) at the Service Director level within the Regulatory Directorate, to allow the current Service Director to focus on strategic planning issues. Noting that the effective implementation of the Local Plan and supplementary planning documents, could lead to significant levels of planning income and improved planning obligation contributions. This will also help enable the work on town centre strategies. Additionally, members will be well versed in the challenges facing the Environmental Health and Housing teams and additional support will help meet the challenges posed by homelessness, housing shortages, asylum seekers and refugees and the ongoing impacts of the perma-crisis of the last three years.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. Prior to advertising the role, the job profile was reviewed to ensure that the criteria were consistent with other Service Director posts, were robust and appropriate and did not unduly disqualify any potential candidate from applying.
- 8.2. In accordance with our standard practice for such roles, it was advertised both internally and externally to ensure that we tested the market to obtain the best possible candidate.
- 8.3. The advert was posted on 31 May 2023, with a deadline of 14 June 2023 for submission of applications. At the initial stage candidates had to complete an application form. Candidates were then shortlisted on the basis of their application form and the successful ones invited to undertake verbal and numerical reasoning tests. These were the same tests previously used in the recruitment of the Service Director Customers and Service Director Place.
- 8.4. The next stage was a written test which candidates were given one hour to complete. Finally the candidates attended an interview with a panel of three officers, during which they had to provide a presentation and answer competency based questions. Details will be provided in the part 2 report.
- 8.5. The application and tests were all carried out online. The panel interview was held in person.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. The Council's Constitution sets out the terms of reference for the Employment Committee which states at 10.3.4(b) "To interview and appoint candidates for the posts

of Service Director, and to interview and recommend to Council the appointment of Monitoring Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Returning Officer/ Electoral Registration Officer.”

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. As set out in paragraph 7.1 Full Council and Cabinet have previously approved the budget for this temporary role. Prior to the creation of the Service Director roles in 2018 the posts were subject to an external job evaluation exercise to determine the salary level for each post.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. The proposals contained within this report for future senior management arrangements of the Authority have regard to the adopted risk and opportunities framework in seeking to ensure that the Council manages its risks in an efficient and effective manner.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2. The Council’s Recruitment Policies are developed and consulted upon in a way which complies with the Equalities Act 2010.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. The Social Value Act and “go local” requirements do not apply to this report.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1. The Human Resources Implications are contained within the body of the report. The Human Resources Services Manager played a full role in the recruitment as part of the recruiting panel.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1. Appendix A – Service Director Housing and Environmental Health Job Profile
- 16.2. Appendix B – Service Director Housing and Environmental Health advert

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 17.1. Anthony Roche, Managing Director
anthony.roche@north-herts.gov.uk; ext 4588

17.2. Ian Fullstone, Service Director Regulatory
ian.fullstone@north-herts.gov.uk; ext 4480

17.3. Rebecca Webb, Human Resources Services Manager
rebecca.webb@north-herts.gov.uk; ext 4481

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1. None.

JOB PROFILE

Job Title:	Service Director – Housing and Environmental Health
Service Area:	Housing and Environmental Health
Grade:	14
Reporting Manager:	Managing Director
Direct reports:	Service Managers

Job summary:

Responsible for the overall management and operation of the Environmental Health and Housing Service. To provide a cost-effective service appropriate to the needs of the community, ensuring the authority adheres to relevant legislation, providing a first-class service and supporting the vision of the Authority in terms of development activity.

Key responsibilities:

To oversee the management of the sections making up the service to ensure an efficient, effective and customer focused service.

To ensure that all required policies, strategies, and plans are developed to meet best practice and deliver the Council's strategic objectives.

To manage and co-ordinate the expertise of the Housing and Environmental Health service and formulate policies, strategies, and proposals and to influence, promote and control activity as required by legislation and political priorities.

To oversee the arrangements for the improvement and enforcement of standards in all areas for which the service is responsible.

To ensure that all regulatory and compliance work is carried out in accordance with statutory and other relevant guidance.

To oversee the development of SMART performance targets and supporting information for the team in line with statutory requirements and locally agreed performance measurement and to ensure that there is continuous improvement to meet and exceed targets.

To ensure that Members are fully briefed on issues relating to the Service and take responsibility for briefing the Portfolio Holder on issues so that key decisions can be taken effectively.

To ensure that arrangements are in place to take the administrative and definitive decisions on behalf of the council and as "proper officer" for the purposes of the Access to Information Act.

To be aware of legislative changes that impact on the service areas and ensure that policy and procedures are revised to comply with statutory and national requirements and standards.

To actively participate in the corporate management of the council, working across services to achieve the objectives of the Corporate Plan.

To provide supportive management to coach, develop and motivate staff and empower them to deliver high quality services and contribute to the achievement of Council priorities.

Political Restriction

This is a politically restricted post under the terms of the original Local Government and Housing Act of 1989, Local Government (Politically Restricted Posts) Regulations 1990, and subject to the amendment under the Local Government, Economic Development and Construction Act 2010.

Political restriction is divided into two categories and relates to the post holder duties, thus;

'Sensitive' posts, which meet one or both of the following duties related criteria,

- Giving advice on a regular basis to the council itself, to any committee or subcommittee of the council of any joint committee on which the council are represented, or where the council are operating executive arrangements, to the executive of the council; to any committee of that executive, or to any member of that executive who is a member of the council.
- Speaking on behalf of the council on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters.

The job holder must therefore be aware that in accepting this job, they are required to confirm that they will conform with these political restrictions and that they form part of their formal contract of employment with the council.

General responsibilities also apply:

[General responsibilities for employees | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](http://north-herts.gov.uk)

Key Requirements:	*
Qualifications:	
A degree or equivalent in a relevant subject	E
Job related experience & knowledge:	
Knowledge of the national policy agenda facing local government and that specifically related to Housing and Environmental Health Service	E
Political skills and sensitivity	E
Understanding and experience of budgetary control, financial management	E
The ability to work strategically to achieve political aspirations within legislative requirements	E
Leadership skills that motivate and inspire staff	E
Proven track record of managing environmental health or housing at a senior level in a complex environment	E
Ability to work effectively as part of a senior level management team	E
Able to contribute to corporate management and issues outside of the service.	E
Knowledge of Health and Safety and Risk Management processes.	D
Experience of appearance at public enquiries and/or Court cases.	D
Skills & attributes required for the role:	
Proven track record in achieving change in a complex organisation.	E
Demonstrably successful project planning and project management.	E
Senior management experience in a large multi-functional organisation.	E
Confident in conversing in fluent English which is sufficient to fulfil all spoken aspects of the role.	E
Excellent written and oral communication skills.	E
Excellent interpersonal skills to gain the confidence and commitment of stakeholders and potential partners.	E

Experience of advising at Committee.	E
Ability to recruit, develop, train, appraise and manage staff at a senior level.	E
Ability to develop effective liaison arrangements within the Directorate, across the Council and with external agencies.	E
IT literate with experience of utilising IT solutions to improve efficiency of service delivery.	E
Analytical skills to convert strategic management issues into practical implementation.	E
Ability to produce practical and creative solutions to meet business objectives.	E
A record of achievement and innovation in a related field to this post.	E
Able to work with partnerships and other agencies towards a common goal.	E
Other:	
Ability to promote the image of the Directorate through articulate and confident approach.	E
Ability to work unsociable hours.	E
Commitment, drive and enthusiasm.	E
Full driving licence and vehicle available for work use.	E
This post is subject to a satisfactory Basic check with the Disclosure and Barring Service and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.	

*E = Essential D = Desirable

Signed..... Employee Date.....

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Service Director - Housing and Environmental Health

Salary: £71,965 – 83689 (including car allowance)

Hours: 37 (full-time) open to flexible working patterns and hours

Hybrid working: Flexibility with homeworking and office based days

Contract: Fixed term 18-month contract

Why work with us?

- At North Herts Council we are committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion and we encourage applicants from diverse backgrounds with a wide range of talents.
- We would particularly like to encourage applications from female leaders and individuals from an ethnic minority background.
- We are proud to be a Disability Confident employer and we guarantee an interview to anyone disclosing a disability whose application meets the minimum requirements for the job.
- We are dedicated to promoting a healthy work/life balance, valuing our employees, and enabling them to make a difference to the local community.

Our benefits include:

- Generous annual leave, including Christmas close down period
- Flexible working options including flexi scheme and home-working
- Occupational sick pay
- Free car parking
- Discounts, including 50% off NHC gym membership
- Local Government Pension Scheme

We focus on learning, growing and professional development and offer opportunities to train and undertake vocational study as well as reimbursing professional subscriptions.

The Role

This is a fixed term role, introduced to provide additional capacity within the Council's Leadership Team deliver the Council Plan and its Priorities, and to lead two key and growing statutory functions. From enabling new affordable housing following adoption of the Council's Local Plan, to homelessness and refugee support, housing improvement and environmental and health protection.

We are looking for an individual who will motivate, inspire and challenge both as a Director and as part of the Senior Leadership Team. This role offers an exciting opportunity for the successful candidate to help steer the Housing and Environmental Health services through the challenging local government landscape.

Ideally, we are seeking experienced senior managers and leaders, but for the right candidate this role would be an ideal step-up opportunity. We would be open to offer this as a secondment.

The Experience you will bring

You will be expected to provide efficient and effective customer focused results, working closely with colleagues across different service areas and councillors is vital as well as collaborating with partners to deliver our key priorities. One of the key aspects of the role is to question current thinking and find new ways of working.

You'll ensure that corporate and strategic ambitions are clearly understood by all and successfully translated into operational delivery, whilst promoting the Organisational Values.

If you want to work in a forward-thinking council to help us meet the challenges ahead and respond to the changing needs of our communities, then please apply.

The job profile for the role provides full details of the expectations and requirements.

About Us

North Hertfordshire is a large rural district with approximately 125,000 residents with four historic towns, Hitchin, Baldock, Royston and Letchworth Garden City. The Council has a clear vision: We put people first and deliver sustainable services, to enable a brighter future together.

How to Apply

To apply for this position, you must complete the Council's online application form at www.north-herts.gov.uk under the Jobs and Careers page using our secure web recruitment tool. Please note that we do not accept CV applications, either on their own or accompanying application forms. Therefore, please ensure that all relevant information is provided on the application form.

The selection process will include online assessments prior to a face-to-face panel interview and presentation. The appointment is subject to a final interview by the Council's Employment Committee, likely w/c 10 July 2023.

The successful applicant for the above post will be background checked with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

If you would like an informal chat about the post, you can contact Anthony Roche, Managing Director on 01462 474588

Closing Date:	Noon on Wednesday 14 th June
Online assessments:	w/c 19 th June 2023
Interviews:	30 th June 2023
Employment Committee:	w/c 10 th July 2023



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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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