

TITLE OF REPORT: Interim Senior Management Arrangements – Care, Wellbeing and Learning

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Cabinet agreement to recommend to Council interim arrangements to cover the role of Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning (including the statutory roles of director of children's services and director of adult social services) pending a permanent appointment to this role.

Background

2. The Council continues to face a number of major challenges in managing significant budgetary pressures, whilst meeting increasing demand as a consequence of demographic changes and a rapidly changing policy context.
3. It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to ensure the Council is able to meet these challenges, and deliver the Council's priorities and objectives, by having the right skills and capacity in the right places across the organisation.
4. Under the provisions of the Children Act 2004 and Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 local authorities must appoint a Director of Children's Services (DCS) and a Director of Adult Social Services (DASS), respectively.
5. In Gateshead Council both of these roles are carried out by the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning. This follows the merger of the majority of services within the Learning & Children and Community Based Services service groups into a single group in 2014.
6. Since the retirement of the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning in January 2016, the Strategic Director role has been undertaken on an interim basis by two different post holders. Following the departure of the most recent interim post holder the Council must now make an appointment to the Strategic Director role in order to fulfil its statutory duties.
7. The Council is currently engaged in a competitive recruitment exercise to appoint a permanent successor to the role of Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning. It is anticipated that a recommendation will be made by Special Appointments Committee on a suitable candidate to undertake the role, in May 2017.

8. Whilst the recruitment is underway, the Council must ensure that it fulfils its statutory obligation to have a director of children's services and director of adult social services.

Proposal

9. Pending a permanent appointment being made, it has been proposed by the Chief Executive that she will fulfil the duties of the Strategic Director, including the statutory roles of the Council's director of children's services and director of adult social services.
10. The exercising of duties by the Chief Executive is considered to be the best option available to the Council at this time. In arriving at this recommendation it is hoped that whilst it is short-term in nature, this decision will provide stability and continuity within the Care, Wellbeing and Learning group, rather than introduce further interim or temporary capacity into the group.
11. The Chief Executive in taking on these duties will work closely, day-to-day, with the group's management team to ensure that there is continuity across the delivery of services. In exercising these duties, she will also work closely with the Leader of the Council and relevant portfolio holders.
12. Whilst the Chief Executive does not have a career background in social care, she has previously temporarily fulfilled the statutory roles of DCS and DASS in her role as Chief Executive at Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council.

Recommendations

13. That Cabinet recommends to Council that the Chief Executive be appointed on a short-term basis to the post of Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning, pending a permanent appointment being made.

For the following reason:

To ensure that the Council is fulfilling its statutory obligations, and is exercising the co-ordination of Council functions, the organisation of its staff, and to enable Council services to be delivered in the most effective way.

Policy Context

1. The proposals will assist in the delivery of Vision 2030 and in the implementation of the Council's Corporate Priorities as set out in the Council Plan 2015-2020 and its policy framework through the efficient use of resources.

Background

2. Under the provisions of the Children Act 2004 and Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 local authorities must appoint a Director of Children's Services and a Director of Adult Social Services, respectively. In Gateshead Council, both of these roles have been carried by the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing & Learning since the post was established in October 2014. With this position current vacant following retirement of the substantive post holder in January 2016 and the interim post holders' departure, the Council must make a new appointment to this post. While arrangements are underway to recruit on a permanent basis, this is unlikely to be finalised until late spring at the earliest; therefore it is necessary for the Council to make an interim appointment.
3. Whilst the Chief Executive does not have a career background in social care, she has experience from previously temporarily fulfilling the statutory roles of DCS and DASS in her role as Chief Executive of Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council.

Consultation

4. Cabinet members have been consulted on the proposals and are supportive of the recommendations.

Alternative Options

5. The Council must make an appointment to the statutory roles of DCS and DASS: there are no suitable alternative options available to the Council. In view of the ongoing appointments process it is not considered appropriate to have an interim internal appointment or a further temporary recruitment.

Implications of Recommended Option

6. Resources

- a) **Financial Implications** –The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms temporary appointment of the Chief Executive will achieve savings as there will be no further expenditure on interim agency cover.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** - There are no specific human resources implications arising from this proposal and report.
- c) **Property Implications** - There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

7. **Risk Management Implications** – There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.
8. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report.
9. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.
10. **Health Implications** – There are no health implications arising directly from this report.
11. **Sustainability Implications** – There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report.
12. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no human rights implications arising from this report.
13. **Area and Ward Implications** - There are no area and ward implications arising from this report.