



**RECRUITMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
AND INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS**

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**Jane Robinson, Chief Executive**

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**Executive Summary**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for interim arrangements covering the period between the departure of the current Chief Executive, Jane Robinson, on 29 July 2016, and the recruitment of a permanent replacement.

**Background**

2. In accordance with her contract of employment, Jane Robinson has given notice that, after eleven years with the Council, including four as Chief Executive, she will be leaving on 15 August 2016 to take up the role of Chief Operating Officer at Durham University. Jane's last working day at the Council will be Friday 29 July 2016.
3. Under the Council's Constitution, the post of Chief Executive fulfils the Council's statutory duty to designate an officer as its head of paid service (s4, Local Government & Housing Act 1989).

**Recruitment of Chief Executive**

4. Under the Council's Employee Recruitment Rules, the appointment of the Chief Executive must be approved by full Council (in accordance with the Local Government & Housing Act 1989) following a recommendation being made by the Special Appointments Committee. The Committee will therefore deal with the shortlisting and interview process before making its recommendation. (Additional steps may be added to the process to support the Committee's recommendation: e.g. an officer interview to inform a recommended shortlist.)
5. As with all recruitment in local government, the appointment of the Chief Executive must be entirely on merit (s7, Local Government & Housing Act 1989).
6. Unless full Council agrees otherwise, the Employee Recruitment Rules require that an external advertisement is placed for the post '... in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it.' (Rule 2(b)).

7. The recruitment process will be commenced as soon as possible, following consultation with the Leader of the Council. However, there is likely to be a gap of at least three months between Jane's departure and a new chief executive commencing in their role; therefore, pending the making of a permanent appointment to the post, the Council should consider interim arrangements.

## **Proposal**

8. Following consideration of all options, including an external appointment of an interim senior manager, it is considered that the interests of the Council would be best served by making an interim appointment from the Council's current chief officers: this will enable a higher degree of continuity for the Council during a period of significant change and uncertainty (including the Council's Change Programme and Devolution) and allows for greater flexibility over the duration of the interim arrangements.
9. Of the potential candidates, it is proposed that Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Service & Governance, be appointed Interim Chief Executive. Mike is the longest serving chief officer, having joined the Council in 2000 and being appointed as Strategic Director, Legal & Corporate Services and Solicitor to the Council in 2008. (Mike was also Interim Assistant Chief Executive for six months during Jane's maternity leave.)

## **Recommendation**

10. Council is asked to:
  - (i) note that the Chief Executive, Jane Robinson, leaves the Council on 15 August 2016;
  - (ii) note the recruitment process to be followed to identify a permanent replacement; and
  - (iii) agree that Mike Barker be appointed as Interim Chief Executive and head of paid service until a permanent replacement commences their term of office.