



**Appointment of Strategic Director of Integrated
Adults & Social Care Services**

Report of the Special Appointments Committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Council is recommended to approve Steph Downey as its new Strategic Director of Integrated Adults & Social Care Services.
2. Ms Downey is currently the Service Director of Adult Social Care at Gateshead Council.

BACKGROUND

3. On 1 June 2024 Dale Owens, who was the Council's Strategic Director of Integrated Adults & Social Care Services, was appointed as the Council's Chief Executive.
4. Recruitment for the new Strategic Director of Integrated Adults & Social Care Services commenced from June 2024 to identify a permanent replacement.
5. The Employee Recruitment Rules, set out in the Council's Constitution and reflecting the requirements of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 ('the Regulations'), provide that the full Council will consider the appointment of strategic directors following a recommendation from the Special Appointments Committee.

RECRUITMENT

6. Following a national recruitment exercise, the Special Appointments Committee shortlisted and interviewed candidates before arriving at a recommendation. This was preceded by a preliminary interview, various psychometric assessments and feedback from panels comprising various stakeholders and partners of the Council.
7. The Special Appointments Committee undertook final interviews with shortlisted candidates on 20 September 2024. The Committee was supported by the recruitment consultancy's national local government lead with support from the Service Director of Human Resources.
8. The Committee agreed that the Council should be recommended to approve the appointment of Steph Downey.
9. The Employee Recruitment Rules also provide that no offer of appointment may be made until every member of the Cabinet has been notified of the name of the person whom the Council wishes to appoint, and of the period within which any objection to the appointment must be made. If no objection is made

by the Leader on behalf of the Cabinet, or if any such objection is not material or well founded, the offer of appointment may be made. Again, this procedure is a requirement of the Regulations.

10. Members of Cabinet have confirmed that they have no such objection.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

- i. Approve the appointment of Steph Downey as Strategic Director of Integrated Adults & Social Care Services, effective from 22 November 2024.