

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Council**

**24 July 2024**

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### **Appointment of Chief Executive**

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To confirm the appointment process and name of the candidate that Council is recommended to appoint as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service of Wiltshire Council and to the designated statutory posts of Returning Officer (RO) and Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) for Wiltshire Council.
2. To confirm that no interim arrangement will be required should this candidate be appointed to the post.

#### **The appointment process and confirmation of preferred candidate**

3. In line with the Constitution, the Officer Appointments Committee have undertaken a comprehensive assessment and selection process for the post of Chief Executive Officer.
4. The Officer Appointments Committee members for this appointment were:
  - Cllr Richard Clewer
  - Cllr Laura Mayes
  - Cllr Nick Botterill
  - Cllr Carole King
  - Cllr Sam Pearce-Kearney
5. The role was advertised internally and externally via a recruitment agency, Gatenby Sanderson, with a closing date of Sunday 26 May. There were 16 applicants, of which eight were considered suitable to be taken forward to a technical assessment. One of the candidates subsequently withdrew their interest, leaving seven candidates for the technical assessment.
6. A technical assessment was undertaken on Monday 10 June by the executive search consultants and John Hewitt, Chief Executive Durham County Council, supported by Tamsin Kielb, Wiltshire Council's Director of HR & OD.
7. A shortlisting report was presented to the Officer Appointments Committee members on Tuesday 18 June, and the Committee agreed that four candidates would be taken forward to the first stage of the formal selection process on Tuesday 16 July.
8. At the first stage of the formal selection process candidates attended three panel interviews with:

- Internal stakeholders
- Partners
- Service Users

These panels were observed by elected members.

9. Four candidates were assessed as suitable to proceed to the final stage of the formal selection process. This took place on Wednesday 17 July and comprised a formal presentation and panel interview with the Officer Appointments Committee.
10. Prior to the selection day the candidates completed four online psychometric assessments, administered through Thomas International.
11. These assessments were collated into an overview report which was shared with committee members, and they supported a question at interview to explore candidates' self-reflection.
12. At the conclusion of the above rigorous selection process, the Officer Appointments Committee recommended that Lucy Townsend be appointed as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service of Wiltshire Council on a permanent basis with a start date to be agreed.
13. Lucy began her career in social work and management roles with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham from 1998-2004. From 2004-2009 she worked for Swindon Borough Council as Planning and Commissioning Manager and between 2009-2014 Lucy worked as Service Leader at North Somerset Council before moving to Wiltshire.
14. Lucy joined Wiltshire Council in 2014 as Head of Safeguarding and Assessment. Between 2017-2020 Lucy was Director of Families and Children's Services.
15. Lucy was appointed as Director of Children's Services (DCS) in March 2020 leading to her becoming Corporate Director People and DCS in July 2020. Lucy also took on the role of Director of Adult Social Care (DASS) for an interim period between July 2021 – February 2022.
16. Lucy holds an MSc in Social Work and Social Work Policy and a BSc in Psychology and has led Children's Services to achieve an Outstanding Ofsted rating. She chairs the Integrated Care Partnership, the Southwest Association of Directors of Children's Services. and she is the Deputy Chair of the Community Safety Partnership.
17. In line with the Constitution every Cabinet Member was notified of the proposed appointment and of their right of objection and no objections were received.
18. The annual salary range for the role is £184,168 – £196,598.

## **Recommendation**

19. That Council:

- a. Appoints Lucy Townsend as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service of Wiltshire Council.
- b. Designates Lucy Townsend the Returning Officer (RO) and Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) for Wiltshire Council.

**Cllr Richard Clewer**

**Chairman - Officer Appointments Committee**

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Report Author: Tamsin Kielb, Director HR&OD