

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	COUNCIL
DATE	17 th December 2014
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Executive
TITLE OF REPORT	Proposed changes to Head of Service Roles within Corporate Governance; and Recruitment and Selection Process to vacant Head of Service role
REPORT NUMBER	OCE/14/042
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for amendments to two existing roles at Head of Service level within Corporate Governance (i.e. Head of IT, Customer Services and Performance and Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development) and for the setting up of an appointment panel for recruitment to the vacancy for the redesignated post of Head of Information Technology and Transformation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council agrees to –

- (1) amend the current post of Head of Information Technology, Customer Services and Performance which transfers the function of the Customer Services to the work portfolio of the Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development and to retitle the post as Head of Information Technology and Transformation. In addition, to retitle the current Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development as Head of Human Resources, Organisational Development and Customer Services.
- (2) establish an Appointment Panel comprising 9 members in total (3+3+1+1+1) to appoint to the Head of Information Technology and Transformation, including the Convener of the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee who should be appointed as Convener of the Appointment Panel;
- (3) delegate powers to the Appointment Panel to agree all matters relating to the recruitment process, including role profile, person specification and salary;
- (4) in respect of the timescale for recruitment processes, that powers be delegated to relevant officers to finalise this timeline, in consultation with the Panel convener;

- (5) appoint external recruitment consultants for the purposes of supporting the recruitment to the post where appropriate;
- (6) invoke Standing Order 1(6)(a) of the Council's Standing Orders relating to Contracts and Procurement to dis-apply the requirements of Standing Order 5, thereby allowing a contract to be entered into with the recruitment consultants to support the recruitment process for this post, without the need to undertake a competitive tendering exercise;
- (7) the estimated expenditure associated with this recruitment exercise, which is estimated to be no more than £50,000, and that these costs be met from contingencies.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

During the financial year there has been significant recruitment at Chief Official level including the campaign for Director of Corporate Governance and appointment to a number of Heads of Service following the organisational restructure. Additional monies need to be identified and approved for this recruitment and selection process. It is estimated the costs for appointing external recruitment consultants, running the assessment centre and the purchase and administration of psychometric tests, candidate expenses etc. should be no more than £50,000. It is recommended this currently unbudgeted cost be met from Council contingencies.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In 2009 the Council undertook a procurement exercise and a framework agreement for the provision of recruitment services was put in place. A Call-Off Contract for the appointment of up to 21 Heads of Service was awarded to Munros Consulting. This recruitment consultants framework expired in October 2012 and to date has not been retendered and therefore cannot be used to obtain the required external recruitment services. Munros Consulting have been rebranded and now call themselves Aspen People Ltd.

It is now requested that Standing Order 1(6)(a) of the Council's Standing Orders relating to Contracts and Procurement, be invoked to allow a new contract to be entered into with Aspen People without the need to seek four quotes in accordance with Standing Order 6 or to undertake a competitive tendering exercise in accordance with Standing Order 5. Ordinarily, where the Council wants to put in place any contract for services with a value below £60,000, the Standing Orders require four written quotes to be sought. Where the estimated value of the contract is above £60,000, a competitive tendering exercise must be undertaken. Matters are slightly complicated here by virtue of aggregation.

Whilst the estimated expenditure is considerably less than the current EU threshold for services contracts (£173,934), the Council has to take account of the aggregation rules, both in terms of its own Standing Orders, but more importantly in terms of compliance with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2012 ("the Regs"). Regulation 8(11) requires that, where the Council is letting a number of contracts which are part of or arise from a "single

requirement” , the value of each contract needs to be aggregated and where the aggregate value exceeds the EU threshold then each constituent/individual contract should be the subject of a tender which is EU compliant.

The “single requirement” here is the provision of recruitment support/consultancy services. Over the last year the Council has expended money on the filling of vacancies including the Directors Corporate Governance and also in relation to appointment for 5 Heads of Service. When these costs are aggregated then the expenditure within this report takes the Council beyond the £60,000 limit and closer to the EU threshold. In these circumstances, the need for transparency and equal treatment increases, and to negate any procurement risk, the Council should undertake some form of competitive exercise in order to comply with its EU Treaty requirements of “a degree of advertising and competition”. However, this would take a number of months and the services believe that there is a greater risk to delaying the appointment process than failing to comply with Regulation 8(21).

As mentioned above, in these circumstances the Council would normally undertake a competitive procurement in terms of Standing Order 5. However, if the Council is satisfied that there are special circumstances to exempt any Contract from these requirements, Standing Order 1(6)(a) can be invoked.

It is felt that this current arrangement justifies invoking Standing Order 1(6)(a), thereby enabling the Council to set aside the need for compliance with the tendering requirements of Standing Order 5, by virtue of special circumstances as there is a time pressure to commence the recruitment process as soon as possible. Tendering would delay this process. Furthermore, Aspen People have supported the Council in all Chief Official appointments for the previous 5 years. It should also be noted that officers have commenced work in conjunction with colleagues in Legal Services and the Central Procurement Unit with a view to retendering the recruitment consultancy/support services it is likely this contract will be awarded early in 2015.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 Following the resignation of the Head of Information Technology, Customer Services and Performance an opportunity has arisen to review the role. Currently, as the job title suggests, the role is diverse in its nature covering information technology together with customer services including customer contact centre, regional communication centre, customer access points, plus corporate performance analysis, reporting and customer complaints. Following staff workshops and the recent IT restructure work, as well as customer feedback, it is clear that the role would benefit from a greater focus which being afforded to the Information Technology aspects of the role. Alongside this, giving the revised role responsibility for delivering the wider transformational agenda will ensure that the IT strategies are in place to underpin these changes going forward.
- 5.2 This will have the effect of removing the customer services function from the existing post. It is proposed that this function transfers to the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development for the following reasons:

- aligns the responsibility for delivering the ‘improving customer experience’ and the ‘improving staff experience’ aspects of the Council’s ‘Shaping Aberdeen’ approach under one Head of Service
- there are synergies between the service responsibility for developing staff and the service that has the first point of contact with customers
- understanding of front line services can help inform the development of the customer services experience going forward

It is proposed that in recognition of adding the customer services function to the current role of Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development it should be retitled as Head of Human Resources, Organisational Development and Customer Services. It is further proposed the current Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development is directly job matched to the retitled role.

5.3 Establishment of Appointment Panel

In respect of the vacancy of Head of Service Information Technology and Transformation in the Corporate Governance Directorate it is proposed:

- (i) **Background** - Standing Order 47(2) states that Directors and Heads of Service of the Council shall be appointed by an Appointment Panel, reflecting the political balance of the Council and chaired by the Convener of the relevant Service Committee or such other member as may be determined.
- (ii) **Composition and chairing arrangements** – that an Appointment Panel is established to recruit to the above vacant post. It is proposed that the Appointment Panel be chaired by the Convener of the Finance Policy and Resources Committee. The composition of the Panel should be 3 Labour (including the Convener), 3 SNP, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 Conservative and 1 member of the Independent Alliance Group.
- (iii) **Delegation of powers to Panel** – In the interests of accelerating the recruitment process, it is suggested that powers be delegated to the Appointment Panel on all matters relating to the recruitment process. This will include salary details and the role profile and person specification for the post. The Appointment Panel will be advised by the Director during the recruitment process and it is recommended that the services of Aspen People be secured to provide the Panel with expertise of executive search, supporting the appointment process and candidate administration.
- (iv) **Timeline** –The current indicative timeline is as follows-

Prior to Festive Break 2014	Appointment Panel meets to agree job description, person specification and remuneration package
Week beginning 12 January 2015	Post advertised

Week Commencing 2 February 2015	Closing date for applications
Week commencing 9 February 2015	Appointment Panel meets to agree a shortlist of candidates
Mid/late February 2015	Assessment Centre held and Appointment Panel meets to interview candidates.

- (v) **Remuneration package/role profile**– It is proposed to authorise the Appointment Panel to agree the role profile at its first meeting.

6. IMPACT

An EHRIA assessment has been undertaken and this is attached.
Recruitment to the post will be of interest to all Council Services, partner organisations and the public.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The current experience is the organisational demands in respect of the portfolio of work for the Head of Information Technology, Customer Services and Performance is too broad. As detailed in the report the synergy between customer services and Human Resources especially given the current direction of the Council in respect of its 'Shaping Aberdeen' approach is an appropriate alignment of these people based functions.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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