

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 24 October 2023.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chair), Mrs S Prendergast (Vice-Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Mrs S Chandler, Mr D Jeffrey, Mr C Passmore, Mr D Robey, Mr C Simkins, Dr L Sullivan and Mr B J Sweetland (Substitute for Mr P J Oakford)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Royel (Director of HR & OD) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

68. Minutes - 20 September 2023

(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2023 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

69. Exclusion of the Press and Public

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

EXEMPT ITEMS

(Open minute of exempt item)

70. Appointment of the Chief Executive Officer

(Item 5)

1. The Chairman introduced this item and explained that since Mr Cockburn's decision to retire there had been an extensive process to recruit a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). As Members were aware, the Member Appointment Panel, which was held in July 2023, concluded that no appointment would be made.
2. This proposal was being put forward to ensure stability and leadership for the council. Mr Royel confirmed that he would return to Personnel Committee in January for the consideration of how to recruit to the role of CEO.
3. The Chairman and Mr Royel responded to questions of detail and noted comments, which included the following:

- a. Confirmation was given that this proposal would not result in any further grade changes within the Senior Staff structure.
- b. The proposal was for a fixed term basis without the right of return.
- c. Solace and the LGA had not been consulted since the unsuccessful Member Appointment Panel in July 2023.
- d. Concerns were raised about the absence of a formal recruitment process for this appointment.
- e. There was not unanimous support for this proposal within the Committee although it was noted that stability was key to allow the Council to come to a solution which gave the best chance of a stable future.
- f. Members requested flexibility on the fixed 18month period and noted that this would be subject to mutual variation and discussion.

RESOLVED that Personnel Committee:

1. AGREE to recommend to the County Council the appointment of Amanda Beer to the post of Chief Executive Officer for a period of 18 months to enable the recruitment to the substantive post of Chief Executive Officer and any variance subject to mutual agreement.
2. AGREE the proposed remuneration for the Chief Executive Officer as described in paragraph 3.4 of this paper.
3. NOTE the implications and changes to other posts in the top tier structure.
4. INSTRUCT the Monitoring Officer to advise on and propose changes to the Constitution to give effect to any changes agreed by this paper at this meeting and for these to be reported to the County Council.
5. INSTRUCT the Director of HR & OD to continue to work on the recruitment to the role on a permanent basis, and for Personnel Committee to receive a further report on this activity in January 2024

Dr Sullivan requested that her vote against the recommendation be noted.

Mr Passmore requested that his abstention on this recommendation be noted.