



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Council**

**20<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

### **Report of the Head of People & Organisational Development**

#### **Matter for Decision**

**Wards Affected: All Wards**

#### **Appointment of Chief Executive**

#### **Purpose of the Report:**

To approve arrangements to recruit a Chief Executive.

#### **Executive Summary:**

This report seeks approval to implement arrangements to appoint a new Chief Executive, following the announcement of the current Chief Executive of her intention to retire. The Council's Constitution sets out that the appointment of a Chief Executive is the responsibility of full Council and that the Special Appointments Committee (SAC) has responsibility for preparing a short-list of qualified applicants. The final appointment decision will be determined at a Special Council in July 2024. Specialist external support will be provided to Members by Gatenby Sanderson. The job description and person specification for the job is attached as an appendix to the report.

#### **Background:**

The Council's Chief Executive, Mrs Karen Jones, has recently advised the Council of her intention to retire in October 2024 or following the next general election, whichever is the later. This timescale provides the opportunity to make an appointment in the summer of 2024, accommodating the notice period that the

successful candidate may need to give to his or her current employer and allowing for a smooth transition to a new Chief Executive.

The Council's Constitution sets out that the appointment of a Chief Executive, is the responsibility of full Council. The Special Appointments Committee (SAC) has responsibility for preparing a short-list of qualified applicants.

The salary that currently applies to the post of Chief Executive is £141,811 - £155,792 per annum (subject to any national pay award that may be agreed and applied w.e.f. 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024).

### **Advertisement**

It is proposed to advertise the position via national advertising and on-line media. In view of the nature of this post, specialist external assistance from Gatenby Sanderson will be provided to support Members throughout the appointment process. This support will include executive search, in order to secure high calibre candidates with an appropriate match to Neath Port Talbot's requirements.

### **Job description and person specification**

The job description and person specification for this post are set out in Appendix 1.

### **Selection process**

The key dates and milestones are set out below:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
25 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Launch recruitment campaign
26 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	Closing date for applications
8 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	SAC Long-Listing Meeting
TBC	Technical Interviews
3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2024	SAC Short-Listing Meeting
3 <sup>rd</sup> / 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	Assessment Centre
17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	SAC Final Short-Listing Meeting
31 <sup>st</sup> July 2024	SPECIAL COUNCIL for appointment decision

Whilst for the most recent appointment at Chief Officer level, the Special Appointments Committee carried out longlisting using anonymised application

forms, this is not recommended by Gatenby Sanderson for this appointment. Due to the nature of this post and the candidates that may apply for it, their advice, based on significant experience recruiting at this level in local government and other sectors, is it would effectively be impossible to anonymise application information without losing information necessary for longlisting for this particular post (e.g. current position and employer); including that information will most likely negate any other attempts to anonymise (e.g. removing the name).

**Financial Impacts:**

Recruitment costs, which include the costs of advertising, specialist support, for example, psychometric testing, candidate travel costs, etc., are expected to be in the region of £30k, which will be met by existing budgets.

**Integrated Impact Assessment:**

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage assessment, attached at Appendix 2, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required.

**Valleys Communities Impacts:**

No implications

**Workforce Impacts:**

This appointment process will be conducted in line with the Council's Officer Employment Procedure Rules.

**Legal Impacts:**

The proposal complies with relevant employment legislation and council employment policy and procedure.

The appointment to a Chief Officer post where the salary is £100,000 or more, is governed by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014. This is reflected in the Council's Pay Policy for 2023/24. Under the 2014 Regulations, where an Council proposes to appoint a chief officer and it is proposed to pay the chief officer annual remuneration of £100,000 or more, the

post must be publicly advertised. The only exception to this requirement is where annual remuneration for a chief officer role is £100,000 or more and the proposed appointment is to be made for a period of no longer than 12 months. This exception will be useful in emergencies or if there were unforeseen departures. The requirement for public advertisement is intended to ensure that able candidates from outside the organisation have the opportunity to gain the position if found to be the most suitable.

The Regulations require that a “relevant body” i.e. the Council: (a) “draw up a statement specifying— (i) the duties of the officer concerned, and (ii) any qualifications or qualities to be sought in the person to be appointed. (b) make arrangements for the post to be publicly advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it; and (c) make arrangements for a copy of the statement mentioned in paragraph (a) to be sent to any person on request.”

**Risk Management Impacts:**

The timescale set out in this report and the use of specialist support, aims to mitigate against the risk of not being able to appoint in a timely manner.

**Consultation:**

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that having due regard to the integrated impact screening assessment that members:

- Approve the enclosed Job Description and Person Specification
- Approve arrangements to recruit a Chief Executive on the basis set out in this report.

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

To comply with the Council’s Constitution, and to comply with the revisions to the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, as set out in the enclosed summary report. This report will ensure that the Council has a Chief Executive in place to cover the statutory and constitutional roles as set

out in the Council's Constitution, whilst ensuring a timely transition to a new Chief Executive.

**Implementation of Decision:**

The decision is proposed for implementation immediately

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Job description / person specification

**List of Background Papers:**

- The Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
- The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (Wales) Amendment Regulations 2014

**Officer Contact:**

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