

## **COUNCIL**

<b>DATE</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
<b>REPORT OF</b>	Councillor Philip Jackson, Leader of the Council
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Appointment of Interim Chief Executive and Interim Section 151 Officer
<b>STATUS</b>	Open

### **CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS**

Chief Officers have a key part to play in supporting the achievement and delivery of the Council's strategic aims and objectives.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A report seeking approval of interim appointments to the positions of Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service and Section 151 Officer.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Sharon Wroot be appointed as the Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025.
2. That Guy Lonsdale be appointed as interim Section 151 Officer from 1st June 2025, on terms delegated to the Assistant Director People and Organisational Development, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

### **REASONS FOR DECISION**

The Council is legally required to appoint one of its officers to the position of Head of Paid Service. The Head of Paid Service is also currently the Chief Executive. The current Chief Executive has given notice of his intention to resign with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

### **1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES**

- 1.1 At a special meeting of the Appointments Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025, the committee considered proposed interim arrangements upon the departure of the current Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service post until the commencement of a substantive Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service.
- 1.2 The committee considered the arrangements in the context of the Government's White Paper on English Devolution (which includes a clear policy commitment to progress Local Government Re-organisation) as well as the recent formal establishment of the Greater Lincolnshire Mayoral Combined County Authority and a forthcoming major inspection (ILACs) in the summer of 2025. As noted in the report, these significant factors reinforce the importance and need for organisational stability at a time of possible material strategic change. Therefore, the committee considered that implementing

interim arrangements at Chief Executive level at this juncture would be a prudent step, allowing time for the national context and related implications for this Council to be assessed and to ensure that the organisation continues to focus on delivery of the Council Plan and related priorities.

- 1.3 In so doing, the Appointments Committee, by a majority vote, recommended to Council that Sharon Wroot be appointed as the Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service and that Guy Lonsdale be appointed as interim Section 151 Officer, both from 1st June 2025. Appointments to these senior positions are reserved to full Council.
- 1.4 Subject to Council's decision on this matter, the Appointments Committee delegated authority to the designated Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service to review and implement such interim arrangements deemed appropriate, to ensure that there is capacity in place to support the continued delivery of the Council's outcomes and priorities. The Assistant Director People and Organisational Development has been tasked with reporting back to the Appointments Committee regarding permanent Chief Executive recruitment options and a related resourcing plan, once the implications of the wider national policy developments referred to in this report are more fully understood.

## **2 RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY ISSUES**

The Council must designate an Officer as its statutory Head of Paid Service, in any event. Stable managerial leadership arrangements in a period of transition is a risk that must be carefully managed. Interim arrangements afford this opportunity.

## **3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

For reasons of capacity, demand, and the need for consistency it is advised that the post should be filled on an interim basis, whilst considerations are made on what a permanent recruitment process would look like and timeframes.

## **4 REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS**

The Chief Executive/ Head of Paid Service is a statutory post and is responsible for ensuring the delivery of the Council Plan and its desired outcomes, failure to have arrangements in place could lead to reputation implications and unrest across the organisation and uncertainty for key partners and stakeholders.

## **5 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The Chief Executive Officer/Head of Paid Service is an established post and is within the budget provision for 2025/26.

Other interim arrangements will be funded within the current budget envelop.

## **6 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS**

None directly arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **7 CLIMATE CHANGE, NATURE RECOVERY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

None directly arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

It is anticipated that any additional capacity identified will be funded from existing financial resources. In the meantime, it is not anticipated that the interim arrangements being put in place will result in any budget pressures.

## **9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to appoint one of its officers as the Head of Paid Service. In accordance with Section 5(1A) of the 1989 Act, the Head of Paid Service cannot also be the Monitoring Officer.

The consideration of the wider emerging national policy is a relevant and compelling factor to consider in how the Council should be placed to best meet its needs.

There is already established constitutional provision that in the event of an interim or acting director, that director has the same constitutional authority as the director proper.

## **10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

The interim arrangements will be arranged in accordance with established HR policies and procedures.

The recruitment process will be managed in accordance the constitution and with established HR policies and procedures.

## **11 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

None directly

## **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Senior Leadership Arrangements Report to Appointments Committee - 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 (report contains exempt information within paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)).

## **13 CONTACT OFFICER(S)**

Victoria Leach, Assistant Director People and Organisational Development

**COUNCILLOR PHILIP JACKSON  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**