

County Council Meeting – 9 April 2024

REPORT OF THE PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- * Tim Oliver (Chairman)
- * Denise Turner-Stewart (Vice-Chairman)
- * Catherine Powell
- * Mark Nuti
- * Sinead Mooney
- * Will Forster

* = Present

A. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

1. The People, Performance and Development Committee met on 27 March 2024 to conduct final interviews for the role of Chief Executive at Surrey County Council. At the culmination of a comprehensive assessment and selection process the Committee interviewed three shortlisted candidates for the post and, following in depth discussion of each candidates' merits, one candidate was selected as the person it is recommending that the County Council appoints to the role of Chief Executive.
2. A supplementary report will be published by 8 April 2024 to provide the name of the candidate and details of their experience and qualifications for the role.
3. The Officers Employment Procedure Rules requires every Cabinet Member to be notified of the proposed appointment and of their right of objection within the period specified in the notification. This process is still underway at the time of publishing this report.
4. The People, Performance and Development Committee **RECOMMENDS** that the Council appoints the candidate named in the supplementary report to follow as Chief Executive and Head of the Council's Paid Service of Surrey County Council.

B. RETURNING OFFICER

5. The Representation of the People Act 1985 Section 35 requires the council to appoint an officer of the council to be the Returning Officer in local elections. Although the Returning Officer is an officer of the council, the role holds personal responsibilities independent and separate from the holder's duties as an employee of the council.
6. The role of the Returning Officer may include the power to:
 - Determine the details and timings of the electoral event;
 - Make decisions on breaches of rule;
 - Determine candidate eligibility;
 - Make judgements on procedural issues or errors that may arise during a ballot;

- Consider all matters that may arise in the wider environment in which the electoral event is being conducted; and
 - Declare candidates elected or options selected.
7. At an election, the Returning Officer may appoint deputies to carry out specific election-related tasks and responsibilities. Habitually, Surrey County Council's elections are carried out by officers in the county's District and Borough Council elections teams, to whom the Returning Officer formally delegates specific tasks.
 8. Surrey's Returning Officer is customarily the Chief Executive of the council and, accordingly, it is **RECOMMENDED** that Council appoints the preferred candidate for the Chief Executive as the Returning Officer for Surrey County Council.

C. INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

9. It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Council approves that Leigh Whitehouse will continue as the Interim Chief Executive and Head of the Council's paid service of Surrey County Council until the new permanent Chief Executive takes up their position, or until Leigh Whitehouse leaves the Council to take up his new role as Chief Executive of West Sussex County Council (the date of which is to be confirmed at the time of publishing this report).

D. REALLOCATION OF STATUTORY SECTION 151 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY

10. It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Council approves that Anna D'Alessandro continues as Interim Statutory Section 151 Officer.

Tim Oliver
Chairman of the People, Performance and Development Committee
28 March 2024