

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF SENIOR RECRUITMENT TASK AND FINISH SCRUTINY
PANEL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2011
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.30 - 9.05 PM**

Members Present: K Angold-Stephens (Chairman of Council) (Chairman), , R Bassett, Mrs A Grigg, D Stallan and J M Whitehouse

Other members present: -

Apologies for Absence: -

Officers Present C O'Boyle (Director of Corporate Support Services), P Maginnis (Assistant Director (Human Resources)) and S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

5. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

No alternate members had been appointed.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(1) Councillors A Grigg and J M Whitehouse declared personal interests in item 6 (Information Gathering and Evidence) by virtue of being party to meetings with the former Chief Executive. The members stated that they proposed to remain in the meeting for the duration of the debate.

(2) Councillor Angold-Stephens a personal interest item 6 (Information Gathering and Evidence) by virtue of being on the Panel that had appointed the current Acting Chief Executive. The member stated that he proposed to remain in the meeting for the duration of the debate.

7. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on 10 November 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

8. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference of the Panel were noted.

9. INFORMATION GATHERING AND EVIDENCE

The Panel considered the following evidence:

- (1) A process diagram for Senior Officer Recruitment;
- (2) Chief Officer Recruitment – Guidance Note;

- (3) Chief Executive – Job Profile;
- (4) Example Council Contract;
- (5) Responses from officers on the proposed review where received;
- (6) Copies of previous reports to Council on appointments 2007 and 1992 (Restricted to members only)

The Assistant Director, Corporate Support Services (HR) attended the meeting to give evidence to the Panel.

It was confirmed that the Acting Chief Executive and the Chief Internal Auditor had raised no issues with processes as part of the Panels consultations stemming from the last meeting.

C O'Boyle reported that she had approached a number of other authorities through the PLP to seek their views on where difficulties in recruitment exercises might lie. Anecdotal comments suggest two main reasons for difficulties: (i) Changes in the Chief Executive and/or the Leadership; and (ii) lack of clarity during advertising and recruitment as to what would be expected of the post holder.

It was also reported that it had been confirmed that support and advice was available from specialists through the PLP at all stages of future employment processes to ensure there were no unintended consequences of any contract.

The Panel considered the draft flowchart and guidance notes and suggested clarification changes to both documents.

It was **Agreed** that the recommendations of the Panel should be covered in the draft report:

- (1) That careful drafting of delegation to appointments Panel to be clear about extent of powers to recommend to Council any contract variations, appointment, short/long listing etc.
- (2) That reports to members be made in a standard template giving all relevant which will include financial and risk assessments information.
- (3) That specialist legal advice be made to members as appropriate through the PLP and HR advice through VINE and budgeted for by Council.
- (4) That an evaluation process be put in place as a matter of course on each senior recruitment event.
- (5) That after the conclusion of the current exercise, the Officer Employment Procedure Rules be redrafted to:
 - (i) incorporate the applicability of section 4 to the Statutory Officer positions;
 - (ii) include more detail of the objection to appointment process set out in the constitution; and
 - (iii) consider its ongoing appropriateness;

(6) That the Committee for the Appointment of a Chief Executive be asked to consider:

- (i) appropriate Performance Management and supervision arrangements;
- (ii) ensuring those undertaking Performance Management and supervision to have access to appropriate training and advice; and authority from Council to undertake this role.
- (iii) whether there should be any process put in place for dealing with employment issues short of formal dispute.

(7) Commending the Flowchart and guidance to the Council.

10. FUTURE MEETINGS

Agreed that the next meeting of the Panel should be held on 12 January 2012.