

Changes to Chief Officer Recruitment

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend to Policy and Resources Committee changes to the protocol for appointing Chief Officers.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 This paper recommends that the Policy and Resources Committee consider and approve the following changes to the recruitment procedure Chief Officers:

- 2.1.1 Head of Service assessment centres are conducted online rather than onsite.

- 2.1.2 Panel sizes are amended for Executive Director and Head of Service interviews, membership comprising:

- Executive Director – 6 Elected Members plus Chief Executive as a voting member (4 from the Administration and 2 from the Opposition)
- Head of Service – 3 Elected Members (2 from the Administration and 1 from the Opposition) plus Executive Director and Chief Executive as voting members

- 2.1.3 Recruitment training is introduced to the elected members' induction programme, which will ensure that there is a cohort of trained members and enable up to 50% of any Appointment Panel's members to be trained.

- 2.1.4 The Council's Constitution is updated to reflect the agreed changes to the Appointments Panel as outlined.

- 2.1.5 The approach taken to the HSCP (Health and Social Care Partnership) Integrated Chief Officer and Head of Service appointments be reviewed and put in place by NHS Highland and Argyll and Bute Council.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The current approach to appointing Chief Officers has been in place for a

number of years and has remained largely unchanged. Over the last two years, partly influenced by the corporate management restructure, the Council has appointed a number of Chief Officers. Each appointment process has provided an opportunity for learning, and feedback has been received from stakeholders involved in these processes. Since the current process was implemented in 2013, technological advances have also allowed for more online recruitment and selection processes.

- 3.2 Recently a pilot online assessment centre was undertaken for the Head of Adult Services posts, which proved successful and cost-effective compared with having candidates onsite for a full day in addition to the interview day. It is therefore recommended that this approach is used for all Head of Service recruitment. Candidates will complete an assessment centre online in advance of the Panel interview and the results from the assessment centre will form part of the interview panel discussion. Candidates who clearly do not meet the scoring threshold expected of a Chief Officer would be deselected following the assessment centre, and consequently would not progress to the final Panel interview stage. This would effectively introduce a 2 stage leeting process, ensuring that the Appointment Panel only interview those candidates who meet an appropriate threshold.
- 3.3 The size and composition of Appointment Panels is currently standard for all Chief Officer posts and does not include line manager involvement. Seven elected members are appointed to the panel, with a balance between the administration and the largest opposition group. The Council Leader normally chairs the panel.

It is recommended that the selection panel size is amended proportionate to the level of the post as follows:

- Heads of Service – Panel of 3 Elected Members (2 Administration and 1 Opposition) plus an Executive Director and the Chief Executive as voting members.
- Executive Director - Panel of 6 Elected Members (4 Administration and 2 Opposition) plus the Chief Executive as a voting member. Elected Members representatives to comprise 4 from the Administration and 2 from the Opposition.
- Chief Executive - Full panel of 7 Elected Members as per current arrangements.

The constitution of the Appointments Panels will continue to be determined by nomination at full Council. As the Appointment Panel is a committee of the Council, the Council Constitution will require to be updated once the new Panel compositions are approved.

- 3.4 In light of the proposed changes above and following the successful use of an online assessment centre for Head of Adult Services posts recently, the approach taken to HSCP Integrated Chief Officer and Head of Service appointments will be reviewed by the HSCP/IJB and put in place by NHS

Highland and Argyll and Bute Council as employers. The process to date has mirrored that used by the Council.

- 3.5 In order to ensure that Appointment Panel members' skill sets are up-to-date, officers will put in place training with the aim of having up to 50% of an Appointment Panel trained. This training will be included in future Elected Member induction. This will ensure that Panel members' skills are current in regard to our internal processes and external factors that influence the recruitment environment such as relevant legislation. This training will include a session by SOLACE, delivered remotely, on the interpretation of assessment centre outputs.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 In conclusion, this papers provides recommended changes to the procedure for Recruitment and Selection for Chief Officer Appointments. This is based on feedback from recent selection processes and opportunities provided by technology.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Policy** – Changes to the protocol for appointing chief officers will require an update the Council's constitution
- 5.2 **Financial** - nil
- 5.3 **Legal** - training will ensure that the recruitment processes are conducted in accordance with legislation
- 5.4 **HR** – Protocol for Recruitment and Selection for Chief Officer appointments has been updated
- 5.5 **Fairer Scotland Duty:**
- 5.5.1 **Equalities - protected characteristics** - nil
- 5.5.2 **Socio-economic Duty** - nil
- 5.5.3 **Islands** - nil
- 5.6. **Risk** – failure to engage with technological changes is incongruent with our status as an innovative Council and could have a detrimental effect on attracting the best candidates to Chief Officer posts within the Council.
- 5.7 **Customer Service** - nil

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