



## **Employment Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on 31 May 2023 at  
11am in the Council Chamber, County Hall**

**Present:**

Cllr Kay Mason Billig (Chairman)  
Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Steve Morphew

Cllr Carl Smith

**Substitutes present:**

Cllr Brian Watkins for Cllr Saul Penfold

**Also Present:**

Kat Hulatt	Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Jane Naumkin	Director for People
Derryth Wright	Assistant Director of HR (Health, Safety and Wellbeing; Performance, Governance and Improvement)

**1. Apologies for Absence**

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Bill Borrett and Cllr Saul Penfold (Cllr Brian Watkins substituting). Cllr Stuart Dark was also absent

**2. Minutes**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

**4. Urgent Business**

None

**5. Appointment of a Chief Executive Officer**

5.1.1 The Committee received the report setting out a proposal for the Council to move to a Chief Executive Model.

5.1.2 The Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer introduced the report to the

Committee:

- The public paper discussed the principle of and the proposed salary for a Chief Executive model, both of which were the function of the Employment Committee.
- The second, exempt report, discussed personal data of some employees and therefore the committee would be asked to agree to discuss this report in private.

5.1.3 The Chair stated that when she became the Leader of Norfolk County Council, she intended to move back to the Chief Executive model because the current model in place at the council was not fit for the current time. She understood the reasons why this model had been put in place at the time, however moving forward would like to see a separation of the political role from the Chief Executive, who would be in charge of the day to day running of the Council.

5.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- Committee Members shared that they supported the move back to the Chief Executive model, however shared concerns.
- One Committee Member asked why the council moved away from the Chief Executive model when it moved to a Cabinet Governance system. He felt that there was a link between the need for the Council to have a strategic review and the fact that it had not been a properly lead and managed organisation since the change to the Head of Paid Service model in 2019. The Committee Member felt that moving to this model had resulted in duplication and excess management layers and hoped that returning to a Chief Executive model would lead to a well-managed officer core in the organisation working closely with Councillors to drive the Council forward.
- The Chair responded that she did not recognise this description of the council. She noted that going through the Covid crisis had called for a different way of doing things and felt that Cllr Proctor had done an incredible job; the council had a balanced budget and was well run. However, there was room for improvement, and the strategic review was something which the council should do to achieve this.
- A Committee Member noted that paragraph 1.2 of the report discussed that the change to the Head of Paid Service model was made due to pressures experienced at the time and queried what these were. They also asked why it was felt this model would be better than the Chief Executive model, pointing out that paragraph 2.1 of the report discussed that one benefit of a Chief Executive model was that it would lead to stronger leadership and therefore wondering if the Head of Paid Service model, inversely, led to less strong leadership. The Vice-Chair was glad to hear that Committee Members supported the move to the chief Executive model. He clarified that at the time of the change from a Chief Executive to Head of Paid Service, there was no unanimity of view of the role of the Chief Executive and the role they had done on behalf of the council and a feeling that the Chief Executive model had not delivered the developments that the Council wanted at that time. It was felt that a change of model was appropriate at that time to provide a period where control was taken by Members, refocussing the officer core of the Council. It was now appropriate to move back to the more traditional chief executive model.

- The Chair confirmed that she had consulted with the monitoring officer before moving forward with this process to ensure the Governance was correct and legal to carry out.
- A Committee Member asked whether there would be more rationalisation and review of Executive Directors under the Chief Executive Officer. The Chair confirmed that the Chief Executive Officer would have control over the job structure underneath them, so it would be important first to find someone to take this role and drive the executive functions of the Council.
- The Chair was pleased that all Committee Members were in agreement with the proposal to move forward with a Chief Executive Model, which was something she wanted to do when she put herself forward as Leader of the Council and which her Group were in agreement with.
- A Committee Member suggested that the Terms of Reference of the Committee should be reviewed to reflect the changes to Governance of the Council if this proposal went ahead. The Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer **confirmed** that if the changes went ahead then she would review the constitution, including the Terms of Reference of the Employment Committee, which would be brought to the Committee for agreement.

### 5.3 The Committee **AGREED**

- to an appointment process being progressed to move to a Chief Executive Model.
- the salary for the Chief Executive Officer being £197,000

## 7 Exclusion of the Public

7.1 The Committee **agreed** to exclude the public for the discussion of Exempt appendix B of report 5, “Appointment of a Chief Officer” and Item 7 “Appointment of a Chief Executive Officer – process” on the grounds that they contained exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 due to containing personal data which outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

## 8 Appointment of a Chief Executive Officer – process

8.1 The Committee received and discussed the exempt report

8.2 The Committee **AGREED** the recommendations as set out in the exempt report

**The meeting concluded at 11:30**

**Chair**