

## Slough Borough Council

**Report To:** Council

**Date:** 22nd November 2022

**Subject:** Appointment of Chief Executive

**Chief Officer:** Stephen Taylor, Monitoring Officer

**Contact Officer:** Surjit Nagra, Associate Director - Customer

**Ward(s):** All

### PART I FOR ENDORSEMENT

## APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

### **1. Summary and Recommendations**

- 1.1 This report sets out arrangements for the appointment to the statutory role of Head of Paid Service.

#### **Recommendation:**

Council is recommended to welcome the appointment by the Commissioners on 26 October 2022 of Stephen Brown as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

**Reason:** The Council is required to have an officer in place to cover the statutory post of Head of Paid Service.

#### **Commissioner Review**

Commissioners have been involved in this process which meets the requirements of the Directions.

### **2. Report**

#### **Introduction**

2.1 A stable leadership environment is seen as critical to the ongoing improvement and recovery of Slough Borough Council. The Council has therefore sought to make permanent appointments to positions in its senior leadership team which were being covered by temporary arrangements.

#### **Options considered**

2.2 The Council is obligated to have a statutory Head of Paid Service - it is common for this role to be combined with the Chief Executive role and this is the recommended approach. The Council could have undertaken an external recruitment, however the functions to appoint to the three statutory governance officers are exercisable by the commissioners appointed by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The commissioners were content for the Council to undertake an internal recruitment process and this has led to a successful appointment.

## **Background**

2.3 This report asks Council to note the decision by the commissioners to appoint Stephen Brown as Chief Executive and to designate him as the Council's Head of Paid Service. The designation took effect from 26 October 2022 following an interview with the Appointments Sub-Committee on 24 October which recommended his appointment. Stephen Brown was recruited to the post of Chief Operating Officer in June 2022 and has been working with senior officers and members on the improvement and recovery plans since that time.

2.4 Whilst the decision to designate an officer as the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service is normally a decision for full council, the power to appoint and dismiss statutory governance officers is covered by the DLUHC statutory direction, and in this instance the Commissioners have chosen to exercise the powers which that direction has given them to take decisions of this sort.

2.5 Gavin Jones, Commissioner for Slough Borough Council and Chief Executive of Essex County Council, has been Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service of Slough Borough Council between his appointment by Commissioners in January 2022 and the appointment of Stephen Brown on 26 October 2022. He retains his role as Commissioner.

## **3. Implications of the Recommendation**

### *3.1 Financial implications*

3.1.2 This post is budgeted for and there are no other financial implications.

### *3.2 Legal implications*

3.2.2 The designation of a Head of Paid Service is a statutory duty under Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Council has the right to designate and appoint the Head of Paid Service. Appointment of a Head of Paid Service would normally be a decision reserved to elected members in accordance with Part 4.7 of the Council's Constitution. However, under a statutory direction made by the Secretary of State for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities, certain functions are to be exercised by the appointed commissioners, either acting alone or jointly. This includes the function to appoint to the position of Head of Paid Service and to determine the terms and conditions of employment of such an officer.

### *3.3 Risk management implications*

3.3.1 The Head of Paid Service is a statutory post which is critical to the success of the Council. As the Council continues its improvement journey, it is important that there is an individual with sufficient capability and expertise in place to fulfil this function. An appointments sub-committee was convened and the candidate recommended to the Commissioners for appointment had the backing of that Appointment sub-committee.

### *3.4 Environmental implications*

3.4.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

### 3.5 *Equality implications*

3.5.1 The statutory post holder should take account of the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Council as a whole is bound by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## **4. Background Papers**

None