
Report To:	The Inverclyde Council	Date:	22 April 2021
Report By:	Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	Report No:	HR/03/21/SM
Contact Officer:	Steven McNab	Contact No:	01475 712015
Subject:	Recruitment of Chief Executive		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the recruitment and selection process to appoint a new Chief Executive for Inverclyde Council.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following the Chief Executive's announcement that he is to retire from the Council's service on 19 September 2021, it is now necessary to consider and agree the recruitment and selection process for a new Chief Executive. This report proposes that steps are taken immediately to fill the position on a substantive basis and details the proposed stages in the recruitment process including the membership of the shortlisting and appointment panels and the selection procedure to be followed.
- 2.2 It is imperative that a replacement Chief Executive is appointed as soon as practicable to ensure continuity and ongoing stability for the Council in the context of future challenges such as planning for next year's Budget and any changes to the Council following the Local Government Elections in 2022.
- 2.3 The appointment process for the Chief Executive was last considered at the Policy and Resources Committee on 31 January 2017 with members agreeing that the appointment would be on the basis of a shortlisting panel of Elected Members, reflecting the political balance of the Council, with the appointment to be made by the Council sitting as an Appointment Panel and the appointment being based on majority vote.
- 2.4 The proposed recruitment and selection process to appoint a new Chief Executive is detailed in section 5 of this report.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Council approve the recruitment and selection process outlined in this report and remit it to Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications to advertise and progress with the process.

Steven McNab
Head of Organisational Development,
Policy and Communications

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Following the Chief Executive's decision that he is to retire from the Council's service on 19 September 2021, it is now necessary to consider and agree the recruitment and selection process for a new Chief Executive. This report proposes that steps are taken immediately to fill the position on a substantive basis and details the proposed stages in the recruitment process including the membership of shortlisting and appointment panels and the selection procedure to be followed.
- 4.2 The appointment process for the Chief Executive was last considered at the Policy and Resources Committee on 31 January 2017 with Members deciding that appointment would be on the basis of a shortlisting panel of Elected Members, reflecting the political balance of the Council, the appointment to be made by the Council sitting as an Appointment Panel with appointment being based on majority vote.
- 4.3 It is imperative that a replacement Chief Executive is appointed as soon as practicable to ensure continuity and ongoing stability for the Council especially in the context of future challenges such as progressing the 2022/23 Budget, and any changes to the Council following the Local Government Elections next year.
- 4.4 It is recommended that the implementation of the full recruitment process to this critical post is commenced without delay rather than any interim, medium term or other arrangements.

5.0 PROPOSED RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCESS AND PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

- 5.1 The composition of recruitment panels for all Chief Officers is detailed in the Council's Recruitment & Selection Policy and highlights that appointment panels will go through a process of selection by secret ballot, if necessary, with the Chair of the panel moving through successive ballots (when required) which eliminate the candidate(s) with the smallest or smaller vote until a majority is achieved.
- 5.2 A general policy of obtaining feedback from peer appraisal (through presentation and questions and answer sessions) has also been agreed for all Chief Officer recruitment as well as having short presentations to the appointment panel with some set questions, supplemented by some specific questions to each candidate. Consideration may also be given to the use of an assessment centre process (for example occupational personality questionnaires, executive scenarios) for Chief Executive and Director level appointments.
- 5.3 Given current Covid restrictions it may only be possible for candidates to engage virtually with the senior staff members and Elected Members as part of the recruitment process. However, should restrictions allow by June, then every effort will be made to explore the possibility of conducting physical interviews with appropriate safety measures in place. Should it be possible for some elected members to physically attend the interview, those attending can be agreed by the Chair of the Panel (Leader) in consultation with the Strategic Leadership Forum.
- 5.4 It is anticipated that the recruitment process will take approximately 5 months from the post being advertised to the appointee taking up post (and assuming a likely three month notice period). Should the start date of the new Chief Executive be after 19 September 2021, it is recommended that the normal short term cover arrangements would apply where each Director assumes the role of Chief Executive on a rota basis without any formalised acting up payments until the new appointee starts in the role.

5.5 The provisional timetable for the Recruitment and Selection Process is outlined below:

- 5.5.1 Advertising – The position of Chief Executive of the Council will be advertised through MyJobScotland website, National Press and other relevant UK wide media. Recruitment packs will be developed promoting the opportunity and providing information to potential candidates.

Proposed timescale - Advertise Friday 23rd April 2021, Closing Date Sunday 16th May

- 5.5.2 Shortlisting – Shortlisting of candidates will be undertaken by a recruitment panel of 6 elected members, reflecting the political balance of the Council (2 Labour, 2 SNP, 1 Independent and 1 from Conservative/Lib Dem/Alba parties). The Leader of the Council will chair the panel.

It is proposed that the shortlisting panel is supported by an external consultancy who will undertake an external assessment of candidates in advance of the shortlisting meeting. The shortlisting panel will also be supported by the Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications and the Chief Executive in an advisory capacity.

Proposed timescale – Shortlisting Panel meet week commencing 31st May 2021

- 5.5.3 Assessment Centre – Shortlisted candidates will be invited to the next stage of the recruitment process which will involve an Assessment Centre process. The Assessment Centre may involve an Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ), Competency Based Interviewing, interviews with a Peer Group Panel, an Executive Scenario and interview with the Shortlisting Panel of Elected Members. Further details on these activities are outlined below and will be finalised in consultation with our external consultants:

- Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ) – The OPQ will be completed by shortlisted candidates on line in advance of the Assessment Centre Day. This will provide additional insight into the candidates which can be further substantiated on the day of the Assessment Centre.
- Competency Based Interviewing – This will be undertaken by external consultants and give valuable insights into an individual's approach and help predict behaviours in future situations. The outcomes of the interview can be analysed in conjunction with the QPO results to give a good indication of a candidate's strengths and weaknesses.
- Peer Group Panel – In line with existing arrangements for Chief Officer Recruitment it is proposed that feedback is obtained on candidates from a Peer Group Panel which will be made up of the Extended Corporate Management Team, some managers and partner representatives. Candidates will be required to give a short presentation to the Peer Group Panel followed by a question answer session.
- Executive Scenario – It is proposed that following the Peer Group session, each candidate will be given a simulated exercise to emulate the type of correspondence and issues that can arise (planned and unplanned) for the Chief Executive to deal with appropriately.
- Shortlisting Panel – The candidates will then be required to present their Executive Scenario findings to the formal Shortlisting Panel and also respond to some set interview questions.

- 5.5.4 At the end of the Assessment Centre day a decision will be taken by the shortlisting panel to progress all or some of the candidates to the final recruitment stage which will involve a presentation and interview with the full Council. It is anticipated that candidates will require to be available for approximately 3 hours on the day of the Assessment Centre.

Proposed timescale - Assessment Centre event week commencing 14th June 2021.

5.5.5 Presentation and Full Council Interview – The final stage in the process will be candidates attending a formal interview with all Elected Members of the Council which will involve a presentation followed by set questions.

Proposed timescale – Full Council Interview week commencing 21st June 2021.

6.6 Appointment – Feedback will be provided to the Full Council on the outcomes of the Assessment Centre day. Appointment of the Chief Executive will follow a secret ballot process, conducted in successive rounds until a majority of those present and voting is secured for one candidate.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance

Given the importance of the post to the organisation and in line with previous Chief Executive recruitments it is proposed to employ an Advertising Consultancy to promote the opportunity and assist with aspects of the recruitment. Previously the Council has used Aspen who remain very active in the Scottish Council executive recruitment market. In line with Contract Standing Orders the Interim Service Director, Corporate Services and Organisational Recovery has approved A Direct Award to Aspen subject to Members agreeing the requisite funding.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
HR	PtOB	2021/22	Up to £20,000	Revenue Reserves	Advertising Consultant Costs to be met from Reserves

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

7.2 Legal

The Interim Head of Legal Services has been consulted on this report

7.3 Human Resources

All Human Resources issues are included in the report

7.4 Equalities

Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

YES (see attached appendix)

X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required
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(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO

7.5 Repopulation

N/A

8.0 CONSULTATIONS

8.1 N/A

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 N/A