



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Senior Staff Committee
7 July 2021
Agenda Item 6

Ward(s) Affected: All

Benchmark salary review and proposed recruitment process for the post of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

Report by the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This report provides the rationale and evidence for the review of the salary of the Chief Executive of Adur and Worthing Councils, required in advance of recruitment activities for this role.
- 1.2. This report also provides an overview of the recruitment and selection process for the new Chief Executive.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That Joint Senior Staff Committee recommends to Full Councils that an increase is applied to the salary of the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, being a range from £134,000 rising to £155,000.
- 2.2. To agree to the proposed recruitment process for the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

3. Salary Review

- 3.1. On September 17th 2015, the Joint Senior Staff Committee received a report recommending an increase to the salary of the Chief Executive to a spot salary of £125k.
- 3.2. This recommendation was based on analysis of the remuneration levels in a benchmark group of local authorities. The benchmark group, recommended by local government specialists SOLACE, included non metropolitan districts in the south east and east of England with populations exceeding 150,000.
- 3.3. The analysis found a median salary of £122k in the group, with an upper quartile figure of £128k.
- 3.4. After consideration of the report, the Committee agreed to recommend an increase to £115k to Full Councils for approval.
- 3.5. The Adur & Worthing Councils' Chief Executive salary now stands at £125,406.
- 3.6. Following the announcement of the retirement of Alex Bailey, Chief Executive, the Director for Digital, Sustainability & Resources and Head of Human Resources commissioned new benchmarking analysis from local government specialists SOLACE.
- 3.7. The refreshed analysis, using the same group of benchmarking authorities, has found that the median salary has now increased to £134k with authorities in the upper quartile paying an average of £155k.
- 3.8. The current salary puts the Adur & Worthing role in line with the lower quartile of benchmarking authorities.
- 3.9. Adur & Worthing Councils are recognised as leading local authorities, being shortlisted for Council of the Year 2020 for both MJ and LGA Awards. The Councils' strategic programme, Platforms for Our Places, is considered by SOLACE to be significantly more ambitious than the norm.
- 3.10. Over the last eight years, the Councils have delivered significant progress in economy and regeneration, progressing major

development sites such as Teville Gate, Adur Civic Centre and the Worthing Integrated Care Centre. The Councils unlocked £25m of investment in gigabit fibre, which is delivering ultrafast access to homes and businesses across the area. The capabilities of the Councils, its people and technologies have been developed over the years, resulting in an ability to respond very well to the pandemic, rapidly issuing grants digitally to businesses and those in need, as well as responding so well to rising demand in housing. The Councils' sustainability agenda has also flourished and grown, with innovative work in both energy and nature restoration, attracting national interest.

- 3.11. In the period, the Councils' sights were also set on developing an effective medium term financial strategy, with strategic property investment, digital transformation and commercial income growth all playing their part. The success of the strategy meant that core and essential services, such as waste, planning and parks could all be effectively maintained as central government grants were reduced year on year.
- 3.12. With Adur & Worthing Councils working at this ambitious level for the benefit of its communities, the next Chief Executive will require very high level skills to help drive continued delivery and further progress.
- 3.13. SOLACE have indicated that the current salary would be unlikely to be sufficient to attract a high calibre, diverse pool of candidates with the depth of experience, track record and/or capability to match and deliver the councils' ambitious agendas.
- 3.14. It is suggested that the current salary at £125k and in line with the lower quartile will not be sufficient to secure the right talent. It is further suggested that the Councils should move away from a spot salary approach, and provide a salary range to provide for progression and assist with retention. This would be managed through the annual performance appraisal process.
- 3.15. A salary range of £134,000 (the median) to £155,000 (upper quartile) is recommended, ensuring the remuneration level is competitive and appropriately aligned to the ambition and success of the Councils.
- 3.16. The alternative option proposed by SOLACE is a spot salary of £144,500, but this is not recommended as per 3.14 above.

4. Recruitment process

- 4.1. The recruitment process for the Chief Executive will commence once the recommendations from the Joint Senior Staff Committee have been considered by both Full Councils on July 20th and 22nd 2021.
- 4.2. An executive search company, SOLACE, has been appointed following a selection process. The support from SOLACE will be vital to ensure we get a good calibre of applicants for this critical post.
- 4.3. The recruitment process will contain a number of steps, as shown in the table below:

Activity	Timeframe
Application opens with executive search activities to find suitable candidates	August
Longlisting and technical interviews	w/c 30 August
Shortlist and assessment centre	w/c 13 September
Internal interviews	w/c 20 September
Final interview at Joint Senior Staff Committee	w/c 4 October
Recommendation to both Adur and Worthing Full Councils	ADC - 28 October WBC - 19 October

- 4.4. The Joint Senior Staff Committee is asked to note this timetable and approve the recruitment of our next Chief Executive Officer through the above process.
- 4.5. The job description for the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service will be reviewed and updated with support by SOLACE and in consultation with Leaders, prior to recruitment launch.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. The current budget for the Chief Executive's salary is £165,450 based on a salary of £125,410.
- 5.2. If the proposals are adopted then the 2022/23 budget will need to be adjusted to accommodate the growth. If the new Chief Executive is

recruited and starts in the new year, there will be a small amount of growth to address and which can be funded from the contingency budget. The final amount will depend on the salary agreed.

	Salary	National Insurance	Pension contribution	Total cost	Cost impact 2021/22	Annual cost impact 2022/23
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Current salary	125,410	16,090	23,950	165,450		
Median salary	134,000	17,270	25,590	176,860	2,850	11,640
Spot salary	144,500	18,720	27,600	190,820	6,340	25,880
Upper quartile salary	155,000	20,170	29,610	204,780	9,830	40,120

5.3. The recruitment of the Chief Executive will cost in the region of £30,000 which will be funded from the Councils' contingency budgets.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 enables a Local Authority to appoint staff on such terms and conditions as appropriate.
- 6.2 The Constitutions of Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council specify the terms of reference for the Joint Senior Staff Committee to include making recommendations to Council on the appointment, and terms and conditions of employment, relating to the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.
- 6.3 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 provide that the appointment of a Head of Paid Service must be dealt with by Full Councils.

Background Papers

Chief Executive Job Description

Officer Contact Details:-

Paul Brewer

Director for Digital, Sustainability and Resources

paul.brewer@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

- 1.1. The post of the Chief Executive is key to delivering on the ambitious agenda in Platforms for Our Places in relation to the economy.

2. Social

- 2.1. The post of the Chief Executive is key to delivering on the ambitious agenda in Platforms for Our Places in relation to communities.

2.2. Equality Issues

- 2.2.1. Recruitment will be undertaken with close attention to matters of diversity & inclusion

2.3. Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

- 2.3.1. Matter considered and no issues identified

2.4. Human Rights Issues

- 2.4.1. Matter considered and no issues identified

3. Environmental

- 3.1. Matter considered and no issues identified

4. Governance

- 4.1. The post of Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service is currently held by Dr Catherine Howe from July 1st 2021 until the appointment to the substantive post.