



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL ON 22 MAY 2024

SUBJECT: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS FOR AN INTERIM AND SUBSEQUENT PERMANENT CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER/HEAD OF SERVICE

BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1. To recommend the proposed approach for recruiting an interim and permanent replacement for the outgoing Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO)/Head of Service of the Council which is a key statutory post in the Moray Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 1.2. The report is submitted to Council in terms of Section A (1) of the Scheme of Administration relating to the appointment of senior management posts at Head of Service Level.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Council:

- i) **agrees to delegate authority to the Interim Chief Executive of the Council to appointment an Interim CSWO/Head of Service in consultation with the Interim Chief Executive of NHS Grampian, the Chair and Vice Chair of Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) to cover the period until the new permanent Chief Social Work Officer/Head of Service is recruited and takes up post (estimated to take approximately 6 months);**
- ii) **approves the progression of the recruitment process for the permanent CSWO/Head of Service post in accordance with current policy;**
- iii) **notes the indicative timeline for the recruitment and selection process for the permanent position; and**

iv) instructs the Interim Chief Executive of the Council to report back to the Council and MIJB on any interim appointment.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An extraordinary situation has occurred with both the MIJB Chief Officer and the CSWO/Head of Service leaving their respective roles at the same time.
- 3.2 The current Moray Health and Social Care Partnership's Chief Officer formally intimated that he will stand down from his role on health grounds and his tenure as Chief Officer will end on 31 May 2024.
- 3.3 Section 10 of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) Scotland Act 2014, states that the MIJB is to appoint the Chief Officer and notes that it must consult with both the Council and NHS Grampian. The Moray Scheme of Integration (an agreement between the Council and NHS Grampian) states that the Chief Officer is an employee of the MIJB and therefore the recruitment to this post is their responsibility.
- 3.4 A joint report addressing the pressing issue of the recruitment, associated process and timescale for the MIJB Chief Officer post has been prepared by both the Interim Chief Executive of the Council and the Interim Chief Executive of NHS Grampian for consideration by the Board on 30 May 2024.
- 3.5 The current Moray Health and Social Care Partnership's CSWO/Head of Service formally submitted her resignation from the role which is effective from 17 June 2024. However, due to outstanding annual leave entitlement, her last day at work will also be 301 May 2024, albeit the current incumbent will retain the Chief Social Work Officer responsibility until 17 June 2024.
- 3.6 In addition to the CSWO duties, and as Head of Service, the post holder is responsible for leading the delivery of the following:
- Children and Families Social Work (including Children's Access Team)
 - Justice Social Work
 - Moray Youth Justice
 - Out of Hours Social Work
 - Contracts
 - Commissioning
 - Children's Services Networks
 - Public Protection
 - Child Health (Health Visiting and School Nursing)
- 3.7 Section 3 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 requires every local authority to appoint a professionally qualified Chief Social Work Officer and it is imperative that continuity of service is secured for this statutory post. The CSWO is an employee of the Council. However, there is insufficient time to

recruit a suitable permanent candidate prior to the current incumbent's departure, and the recruitment process for a permanent replacement is estimated to take approximately 6 months.

- 3.8 Therefore, in the meantime, alternative temporary arrangements are necessary to cover any potential gap in statutory provision. Accordingly, it is proposed that appropriate arrangements are put in place to recruit a suitably qualified and experienced interim CSWO prior to the end of May 2024.
- 3.9 The Council's current Scheme of Delegation deals with Acting Chief Officer Appointments, but it does not give the necessary delegated power to the Chief Executive to appoint an Interim CSWO or Head of Service, and as a result, formal Council approval is required to secure the appropriate delegation on this occasion.
- 3.10 It is proposed that a recruitment panel comprising the Chair, Vice Chair of MIJB, the Interim Chief Executive of the Council and the Interim Chief Executive of NHS Grampian (partner representative), the Head of HR, ICT and Organisational Development is used for the recruitment of the Interim CSWO/Head of Service.
- 3.11 The recruitment process for the permanent CSWO/Head of Service will be progressed as quickly as practicable in accordance with the Council established policy and the permanent post will be advertised no later than June 2024.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)) and Moray Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan "Partners in Care 2022-2032"

This report forms part of the governance arrangements of MIJB; good governance arrangements will support the Board to fulfil its objectives.

(b) Policy and Legal

The role of the Chief Social Work Officer is a statutory requirement. To fail to make plans to appoint an incumbent Chief Social Work Officer would result in non-compliance with the Section 3 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.

The National Care Service Bill is currently being progressed and will bring further change to the Integration of Health and Social Care. The role and remit of the Chief Officer may be subject to review to ensure it meets the requirements of any future legislative change. Where this is necessary, the matter will be brought to the Council's and MIJB's attention.

- (c) Financial implications**
Marginal additional costs may occur because of interim market rates which are normally higher than the gross cost of permanent employees.
- (d) Risk Implications**
As with all recruitment, there is a risk that a suitable candidate may not be found. Ensuring a robust assessment of candidates provides assurance for the Council that candidates are sufficiently qualified, experienced and competent for the requirements of the role.
- (e) Staffing Implications**
There are no staffing implications arising from this report.
- (f) Property**
There are no property implications arising from this report.
- (g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**
An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required as there is no change to policy and procedures resulting from this report.
- (h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts**
There are no climate change or biodiversity implications arising from this report.
- (i) Consultations**
Consultation on this report has taken place with The Head of HR, ICT and Organisational Development who agrees with the content in relation to her area of responsibility. The following partners were also consulted in the writing of this report and views incorporated: Chair and Vice Chair of MIJB, Leader and Depute Leader of the Council and Interim Chief Executive of NHS Grampian

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This report provides a summary of key recruitment issues for the MIJB and the resulting need to recruit an Interim Chief Social Work Officer/Head of Service to ensure compliance with statute until a permanent replacement is appointed.**

Author of Report: John W Mundell OBE, Interim Chief Executive
Background Papers: [Health and Social Care Integration Scheme for Moray](#)

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