



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL ON 8 MAY 2019

SUBJECT: RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES FOR SENIOR STAFF

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (CORPORATE SERVICES)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To invite the council to consider the procedures for the recruitment of senior staff and to amend these to incorporate improvements.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Council in terms of Section B (27)(d) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to formulation and review of the policies for the appointment of all employees.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Council approves the revised procedures for the appointment of senior staff as set out in Appendix B.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Para I (5) of the Scheme of Administration states that senior officers will be appointed "in accordance with the recruitment scheme approved by the Council". For this purpose, senior officers are deemed to be the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and Heads of Service. The current recruitment procedures were approved by the Moray Council 7 December 2016 (para 6 of the minute refers). **Appendix A** and original wording of **Appendix B** set these out.
- 3.2 The revised procedures agreed at that time introduced a range of recruitment assessments aimed at testing out candidates' suitability against the range of job requirements using different methods for challenge and verification of results that take account of varying styles and strengths of candidates. Importantly, smaller recruitment panels were established which are recognised as being more effective and adaptable.
- 3.3 Following a pilot of the recruitment procedures, it was concluded by all involved that they were very informative and provided a fuller, more rigorous and evidence based assessment of the candidates in relation to the person specification for the job. These procedures continue to be in place for heads of service and have proved to be effective in their application.

- 3.4 However, the procedures for Director appointments were subsequently amended to revert to the larger full council appointment committee. In a report to the Council on 7 December 2016, it was reported that the amendments made to the procedures in respect of the appointment of Directors had proved less effective. They had reverted to previous practice and had re-instated some of the short-comings of the historical processes. In particular the effectiveness of large recruitment panels and the proper consideration of the assessments emerging from the whole recruitment process were of concern.
- 3.5 At that time, experience of operating the amended larger appointment panel procedures for Directors was reported as having been more problematic and particular examples included:
- the inability of a large group (26 members) to follow up on issues of concern in an application;
 - inability to provide professional challenge where answers are not sufficiently clear or robust;
 - lack of opportunity for adequate advice and guidance to be offered and followed in a large formal setting;
 - “halo” effect in formal presentations where there may be limited substance beneath the presentation;
 - too much weight applied to the formal committee interview and not enough to the overall recruitment process and variety of assessment methods;
- 3.6 More recent experience continues to reflect these concerns in the appointment of directors. It is suggested that learning is taken from the experience of appointing Directors contrasted with appointing Heads of Service and that to address the issues that have arisen with Directors appointments, the revised procedure in Appendix B should be adopted. This is a closer reflection of the process for Heads of Service with the addition of a measured and weighted method of scoring performance throughout the whole recruitment procedure to ensure that all of the elements are taken into account in the final decision.
- 3.7 The procedure for Heads uses an appointing committee rather than full council, which allows for political input but is smaller, enabling some questioning of candidates and due account to be taken of professional advice. This is considered to be a stronger recruitment model.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The recruitment procedures are designed to ensure that senior staff can be recruited to support and deliver the Council's priorities.

(b) Policy and Legal

This report takes account of the council's policies on recruitment and selection. There are no legal implications.

(c) Financial implications

None.

(d) Risk Implications

The weaknesses in the current procedures are outlined in the report and risks of continuing with these are that an inappropriate or less than ideal appointment is made which impacts on the capacity the council has to deliver its priorities. The wrong appointment at a senior level can have significant consequences for the organisation and can be expensive to resolve at a later date.

(e) Staffing Implications

None.

(f) Property

None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The procedures used in the recruitment process take account of relevant equalities requirements and all members and staff involved receive appropriate training.

(h) Consultations

The Corporate Management Team have been consulted and their comments incorporated into the report.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Experience of the recruitment procedures for Directors have identified some areas for improvement and revisions to the recruitment panel, appointing committee and a measurement and weighting of the whole recruitment process are recommended to address these.

Author of Report: Denise Whitworth

Background Papers: Moray Council 03-08-2011

Moray Council 15-02-2012 (para 6 of minute)

Special Moray Council 18-03-2014 (para 4 of minute)

Moray Council 28-05-14

Moray Council 7 December 2016

Ref: