
Appointment of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)

- 1** The purpose of this item is to seek approval for the appointment of a Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive).
- 2** In accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 and the County Council's Standing Orders an Appointing Committee was convened, chaired by the County Chairman, to deal with the selection process. The Committee comprised:
 - Pete Bradbury - Chairman of the Council
 - Paul Marshall - Leader of the Council
 - Deborah Urquhart - Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change
 - Garry Wall - Member for Lindfield & High Weald
 - Kirsty Lord - Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group
 - Chris Oxlade - Leader of the Labour Group
- 3** Following a formal interview on 20 March the Appointing Committee agreed that, subject to approval by the County Council, Leigh Whitehouse should be offered the post of Chief Executive. Details of Leigh's background and experience are attached at Appendix 1.
- 4** In accordance with regulations introduced under the Local Government Act 2000, all members of the Cabinet were informed of the Appointing Committee's proposals. The Leader has confirmed to the Director of Law, Assurance that the Cabinet has no objection to the proposed appointment. The proposal is that the salary for the post of Chief Executive will be £225,000 per annum.
- 5** Before setting the salary, the role was market tested in terms of current pay levels for existing chief executives in county, unitary, and district and borough roles. The proposed salary reflects the outcome of this market testing.
- 6** The regulations require the full County Council to approve the appointment of the Head of the Paid Service and members are therefore asked to agree the recommendation set out below.

Recommended

That Leigh Whitehouse be appointed to the post of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) of West Sussex County Council with effect from a date to be agreed but no later than end July 2024.

Pete Bradbury
Chairman

Contact: Gavin Wright: gavin.wright@westsussex.gov.uk

Appendix 1 - Details of the proposed appointee

Background Papers: None

Mr Leigh Whitehouse**Background**

Leigh is currently acting Chief Executive and Executive Director of Resources at Surrey County Council. He has extensive experience in Local Government spanning more than 25 years. Leigh began his career in Finance at the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham where he became Deputy Director of Finance.

In 2015, Leigh joined the Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames as joint interim Chief Executive and Director of Finance (S151). He moved to the London Borough of Bexley in 2017 as interim Director of Finance & Corporate Services.

Leigh joined Surrey County Council as Director of Finance in 2018. In 2019, he was appointed Executive Director of Resources and became Deputy Chief Executive in 2021.

In addition to his current role, Leigh is a Parent Governor and Chair of the Resources Committee at Derwentwater Primary School and has previously been a Trustee and Council Member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.