

To: Council
Date: 5 October 2020
Report of: Head of Business Improvement

Title of Report: Extension of Chief Executive's Fixed Term Contract

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	Council is asked to approve the recommendation of the Appointments Committee to extend the Chief Executive's fixed term contract to 30 April 2021
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Susan Brown, Leader
Corporate Priority:	All
Policy Framework:	N/A
Appointments Committee recommendation: That Council resolves:	
1. To extend the Chief Executive's fixed term contract to 30 April 2021.	

Appendices
None

Introduction and background

1. This report sets out the rationale for an extension to the Chief Executive's fixed term contract which is due to expire on 31 December 2020.
2. Gordon Mitchell was appointed originally as Interim Chief Executive on a fixed term contract from 15 May 2017 until 31 December 2017. This fixed term contract was extended by Council on 27 November 2017 and will terminate on 31 December 2020.
3. This arrangement was intended to allow a focus on a number of large areas of transformation at that time including the establishment of Oxford Direct Services as a wholly-owned company, lobbying with partners for government investment in growth, and strengthening the capacity of the Council to manage and deliver the aspirations for major development projects. Additionally it was envisaged that the current Chief Executive would support the establishment of a new Council following the all-out elections on 7 May 2020 and thereafter assist with the appointment of a

new permanent Chief Executive. The crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic led to the postponement of the 7 May 2020 local elections until 6 May 2021.

Proposal

4. Following some months of crisis response the Council is beginning to understand how services will be able to function in the new normal. As the context for the Council over the coming years is becoming clearer it is timely and prudent to begin the process of recruiting a permanent Chief Executive. This was the Council's original intention albeit there has been some delay in finalising this position while the Council assessed the changing circumstances. The Appointments Committee on 21 September 2020 agreed to commence an open recruitment process for the role of Chief Executive (also Head of Paid Service).
5. If the process of recruiting begins as soon as practicable, as intended, the Council would expect to be in a position to make an offer of employment in December 2020. An external candidate would likely be subject to a 3 month notice period. Given the time constraints until the Chief Executive's contract is due to expire and to ensure that this contract does not lapse, Council is recommended to extend the current Chief Executive's fixed term contract to 30 April 2021. This extension would provide for continuity until a new Chief Executive is in post and allow time for a handover to take place.

Financial Implications

6. The Chief Executive's salary is budgeted at around £160k per annum plus on-costs and there is sufficient budget held within the Council's General Fund to cover the cost of this established post.

Legal Implications

Under the Council's Constitution the Chief Executive is Head of Paid Service. Part 20 of the Constitution (Employment Rules) provides that the Appointments Committee oversees the arrangements for recruiting to the Head of Paid Service role, and on the recommendation of the Appointments Committee the Head of Paid Service is appointed by Council.

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Background Papers: None