

Merton Council Council

20 November 2024

Supplementary Agenda 5

16 Chief Officer Recruitment

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Full Council	DATE 20 th November 2024
REPORT/DECISION TITLE Senior Recruitment	WARD(S) All
CHIEF OFFICER Asad Mushtaq, Executive Director for Finance and Digital	CABINET/LEAD MEMBER Councillor Billy Christie, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services.
DECISION CLASSIFICATION Non-exempt report	IS THE FINAL DECISION ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS REPORT TO BE MADE AT THIS MEETING? Yes

1 Recommendations:

- A. That Full Council approves the recommendations from the Appointments Committee that the salary package for the role listed in section 2 below should be agreed in accordance with the Council’s Pay Policy Statement.

2 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

The post of Director of Digital Innovation is a key role in the Council-wide transformation and modernisation through delivery of a cutting-edge IT service. Driving forward innovation as a digital leader and leading on developing a digital strategy that will ensure a modern and enabled workforce, deploy technology to allow our residents, businesses and stakeholders to interact with the Council more reflective of their needs and to develop the connectivity of the borough.

The current postholder is on a fixed term contract which is due to expire at the end of March 2025, and a permanent replacement will then be required.

The Appointments Committee recommends that Full Council agrees to the salary package for the Director of Digital Innovation role outlined below in accordance with the Council’s Pay Policy Statement. The salary range for the role is £111,510 - £119,229 per annum, plus a market supplement of up to £23,681 per annum, to take the total maximum salary package to £142,910 per annum. This is due to comparator salaries, demand of expertise in this field and transferability of skills across both public and private sectors, and benchmarking of similar posts.

The role is not a Member appointment, but the Executive Director of Finance & Digital will be asking the relevant Cabinet Lead to take an informal role in the recruitment process.

The Job Description for the role is included as an Appendix to this paper.

3 Links to the Merton Priorities (Borough of Sport/Civic Pride/Sustainable Futures)

- 3.1 This report relates to the Council's Strategic priorities as follows:
- 3.2 Permanent recruitment to this senior role is vital to the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives.

4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 The role of the Director of Digital Innovation is currently covered by a postholder on a fixed term contract, which is due to expire at the end of March 2025. The post was created through a departmental restructure in early 2024 and has been filled initially through a 12 month fixed-term contract. The Council now needs to recruit to this position on a permanent basis.
- 4.2 The role is a key role in the Council-wide transformation and modernisation through delivery of a cutting-edge IT service. Driving forward innovation as a digital leader and lead on developing a digital strategy that will ensure a modern and enabled workforce, deploy technology to allow our residents, businesses and stakeholders to interact with the Council more reflective of their needs and to develop the connectivity of the borough.

5 Available Options

- 5.1 Option 1 – Agree to the Salary range for the permanent recruitment of the post of Director of Digital Innovation to commence as soon as practically possible after the expiry of the current fixed term contract. The advantage of this would be the continuation of the digital innovation service to lead the Council's digital strategy by deploying technology that would allow our resident, businesses and stakeholders to interact with the Council reflective of their needs.
- 5.2 Option 2 – Disagree to the salary range for the permanent recruitment of the post of Director of Digital Innovation. This will lead to the expiry of the current fixed term contract and the role ceasing to be operational.
- 5.3 Option 3 – Do nothing. This will lead to the expiry of the current fixed term contract and the role ceasing to be operational.

6 Preferred Option

- 6.1 Option 1 above is the preferred option, to ensure the continuation of the Council's digital strategy in developing the connectivity of the borough and to support our residents, businesses and stakeholders to interact with us in a way that is reflective of their needs.

7 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 In accordance with the Council's Pay Policy Statement, Council is required to approve the salary range for this senior appointment.

8 Consultation Results

8.1 Not applicable

9 Next Steps & Timetable: Communication and Implementation of the Decision

9.1 The appointment will be communicated internally and externally as appropriate.

10 Report Appendices

10.1 Appendix A – Job Description

11 Background Papers

None

12 Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications and Sign-Off

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal including Human Rights Act	<p>Section 38 Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to prepare a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year. It must be approved by a resolution of the Council before it comes into force, it must be prepared and approved before 31 March, and it must be published in such manner as the Council thinks fit (which must include publication on the website).</p> <p>Section 40 of the Localism Act includes provision for the Secretary of State to issue guidance on the content and application of pay policy statements. Councils must have regard to this guidance in the exercise of their functions under the pay policy provisions. The Guidance is statutory guidance, and although it is not law, it is not mere advice, and the Council must consider it carefully and have cogent reasons if it wishes to depart from it. Failure to do so may result in any decision being challenged.</p> <p>The Guidance advises that Full Council should be given the opportunity to vote before salary packages of £100,000 or more are offered in respect of a new appointment. This is consistent with the Council's pay policy statement which states that the approval of Full Council is required prior to</p>	<p>Fabiola Hickson, Head of Law and Procurement & Information Governance</p> <p>7/11/2024</p>

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
	<p>any offer of employment being made where the proposed salary exceeds £100,000.</p> <p>The recommendation in this report complies with the pay policy statement approved by Full Council.</p>	
Finance and other resources	Salary for the Director of Digital Innovation role is contained within agreed budgets for 2024/25.	<i>Asad Mushtaq</i> 11/11/24
Equalities	The contents of this report are designed to ensure that the Council's processes are human rights and equalities compliant, in particular in relation to compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Grading of posts is based on the principles of equal value as determined by use of objective job evaluation schemes. Recruitment will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's recruitment procedures.	<i>Asad Mushtaq</i> 11/11/2024
Climate change	<i>The decisions recommended in this paper have a remote or low impact on Merton's Climate Strategy & Action Plan adopted by full Council on 18th November 2020</i>	<i>Asad Mushtaq</i> 11/11/24
Executive Director	<i>Clearance/Approval of Report</i>	<i>Asad Mushtaq</i> 11/11/24
Cabinet Member/s	<i>Clearance/Approval of Report</i>	<i>Cllr Billy Christie</i>
<p>REPORT AUTHOR: Asad Mushtaq, Executive Director Finance & Digital Email asad.mushtaq@merton.gov.uk</p>		

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
FINANCE AND DIGITAL DIRECTORATE
JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: Director of Digital Innovation

Grade: MG5

DIVISION/SECTION: IT & Digital

Location: Civic Centre, Morden

Responsible to: Executive Director of Finance & Digital

Responsible for: ICT & Digital Services

Post number: M3038340

Date: February 2024

1. MAIN PURPOSE

This post reports to the Executive Director of Finance & Digital and is a key role in the organisation that will lead as the key building block for Council-wide transformation and modernisation through delivery of cutting-edge IT service and driving forward innovation as a digital leader.

The post will manage the Council's in-house IT and Digital service and manage directly a gross revenue expenditure budget £10.7m as well as a multi-year multi-millions capital programme. You will lead a workforce of over 50 staff.

The postholder will be responsible to develop a digital strategy, in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, to further its digital ambition.

The digital strategy will ensure a modern and enabled workforce, deploy technology to allow our residents, businesses and stakeholders to interact with the Council more reflective of their needs and to develop the connectivity of the borough.

The post will lead on the development of corporate strategies and policies on IT, digital and communication technologies to ensure an enabling service to support ambitions of services.

It will ensure that the Council cyber-security is continuously developed and is robust.

2. MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- (i) Develop a digital strategy and delivery plan that deploys cutting-edge digital technology and data management techniques to modernise the Council and make it more enabling for the organisation to run their services more efficiently and effectively and to give residents, businesses and stakeholders a better experience when interacting with the Council
- (ii) Lead the Council's digital transformation and continuous improvement of how residents and business interact with Council, deploying the latest digital and IT technologies to enable an enabling and modern customer experience, promoting a digital first approach and supporting digital inclusion.
- (iii) To lead the IT and Digital service as a key enabler for transformational change and improvement across the Council's workforce, allowing it to be modernised and deploy technology and reporting to enable the Council's workforce to be cutting edge, technologically agile and enable teams to undertake their priorities supported my enabling technology
- (iv) Work collaboratively with Digital and IT sector leaders and Departments to ensure IT and Digital solutions are at the heart of service design and decision making, removing barriers and enabling staff to be innovative, and work with stakeholders across departmental and organisational boundaries to co-design inclusive and joined-up services that are efficient, effective and meet the requirements of the workforce, residents and communities
- (v) Protecting the Council and keeping it cyber secure, ensuring all it's in-house, external and supply-chain systems are cyber secure and it's data is safe wherever it is located
- (vi) Establish and embed a culture within IT and Digital Services, which is customer focussed and enabling for departments
- (vii) Mapping out the major priorities for digital and IT business systems transformation and improvement, working with services to ensure a coherent plan for investment in systems aligns with the IT and Digital strategies
- (viii) Identify the need for upgrades, configurations or new systems, ensuring an effective forward planning system that ensures the council is able to operate efficiently and effectively across a range of complex service needs

- (ix) Acting as a key strategic IT and digital adviser to the Cabinet, Corporate Management Team and wider organisation and engage with and co-execute the Digital and IT Transformation agenda
- (x) Be an effective leader and maintain proactive budget monitoring of the ICT and Digital department, ensuring sound financial management of the service
- (xi) Develop and maintain a resilient and high performing IT ecosystem so that technology empowers the day-to-day activities of Council staff and partners as they support residents with effective services.
- (xii) Work with Departments to identify opportunities to deliver technological transformation, leading on the evaluation, design, implementation, development and maintenance of the council's ICT applications and infrastructure, ensuring technology standards and best practices are met and there is alignment between wider organisational transformation and digital solutions.
- (xiii) Any other duties as requested by the Executive Director of Finance & Digital.

3. Director – General Accountabilities

- Role model the values and behaviours of the organisation and be an ambassador for and represent the Council at all times: [Work for Merton \[DRAFT\] : Values | Merton Council](#)
- Ensure services have operational plans in place to deliver the Council Plan on time and to budget.
- Work collaboratively across all service areas with other senior managers (including partner organisations) to deliver services and generate efficiencies.
- Ensure the service areas you manage are fully compliant with all existing or new legislation and other statutory requirements.
- Ensure effective performance management is in place, and that any remedial action is taken promptly.
- Manage your teams effectively, ensuring individuals are well-supported, diversity is encouraged and performance is monitored.
- Ensure at all times that a corporate view is adopted and that complaints (both internal and external) are dealt with promptly and effectively.

- Be responsible for equality in service delivery and employment, and work within relevant legislation carrying out Equality Impact Assessments where necessary.
- Ensure that strategic and operational risks are considered and that appropriate actions and reporting are put into place to manage these.
- Attend emergency planning training, be familiar with the London Borough of Merton Emergency Plan and your role during an incident. This may involve receiving notification out of hours and to respond positively to these calls.
- Required to take part in the emergency rota and participate in elections.
- Deputise for the Director and represent the Directorate as required on corporate and external activities and groups.

4. Responsible for:

IT and Digital teams

5. PERSON SPECIFICATION

Experience, Skills and Technical Requirements

- Experience of delivering organisation-wide digital transformation in a large, complex organisation at a strategic level and overseeing the implementation of this vision with quantifiable business-wide impact
- A successful track record of leveraging organisation-wide systems and technology to transform business operations
- Experience of delivering large-scale efficiencies of an organisation's IT infrastructure to deliver a streamlined, agile, modern and cost-effective technological operating environment
- A history of implementing processes which enable services to better use technology that transforms service delivery but using a strong corporate governance framework that aligns with IT and Digital strategies
- A track-record of delivering an effective digital strategy and project plan that has delivered genuine digital transformation for the workforce and wider customers
- An understanding of how technology can be used to better enable our residents, businesses and service users to meaningfully interact with us

- Strong leadership in innovative technological solutions and how to deploy them
- Respected senior leader skilled in working with and influencing senior stakeholders in both the public and private sector, and clear track record of delivering results in a political environment.
- Skilled at leading large and multi-faceted teams, including leading teams through change, and a significant track record of continuous improvement.
- Demonstrable experience of strategic and innovative thinking with a proven track record of delivering results against tight deadlines and stretching targets.
- Experience of leading a mixed team of both internal staff and technical, expert consultants and delivery contractors, and building an inclusive team culture.

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