

Committee: Appointments Committee

Date:

Agenda item:

Wards: All

Subject: Appointment to the post of Director of Children Schools and Families

Lead officer: Liz Hammond, Interim Head of HR

Lead member: Chair of Appointments Committee and Leader of the Council

Key decision reference number:

Exempt or confidential report

The following paragraph of [Part 4b Section 10 of the constitution](#) applies in respect of information given in appendix 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of this report and they are therefore exempt from publication:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

Members and officers are advised not to disclose the contents of these appendices.

Recommendations:

- A That the Committee approves the job description and person specification to use for the recruitment campaign.
- B That the Committee decides which executive search agent to use for the recruitment campaign depending on the track record and approach to attracting BAME candidates proposed by each supplier.
- C That the Committee agrees to establish a sub-committee for the purposes of agreeing a shortlist of candidates and to act as the interview panel for the final interview.
- D. That the Committee approves the general recruitment process as outlined in 2.6 and delegates the decision as to which candidates to longlist, which technical assessor to use for the preliminary interviews and which psychometric profiling to undertake, to the Chief Executive.
- E To agree to offer a salary in the range of £145k - £160k per annum is necessary.

1. Purpose of report and executive summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Committee to approve the job description and person specification to be used in the recruitment campaign for the Director of Children, Schools & Families.
- 1.2 In addition, the Committee is asked to decide which of the four executive search head hunters should be asked to support this recruitment process.

- 1.3 Thirdly, the Committee is asked to establish a sub-committee for the purpose of agreeing the shortlist of candidates to proceed to the final interview stage.
- 1.4 The Committee is finally asked to approve the proposal to advertise the post of Director of Children Schools and Families in the range £145k - £160k per annum (inclusive of a market supplement), and the proposal to pay towards the top of the salary range if an exceptional candidate is found but cannot be secured within the lower end of the salary range.

2. Details

- 2.1 The job description and person specification for the post of Director of Children Schools and Families (Appendix one) are to be agreed.
- 2.2 The executive search head hunters to run the recruitment campaign for the post are to be decided by the Committee. Four specialist executive search agents have expressed their interest through the Local Government Resourcing Partnership (LGRP) framework. A summary of their track record of recruiting to similar roles both in London and nationally and their approach to equalities and diversity can be seen at Appendix four (exempt from disclosure) and their full proposals can be found at the Appendices five to eight (exempt from disclosure). Recommendations on each supplier made at Appendix four (exempt from disclosure) are based upon their track record of recruiting to DCS roles and also their experience of attracting BAME candidates. Their approach to diversity is of significant importance, as the Director role is also the lead on the Council's equalities agenda, which is a key focus point. Recent equalities data shows that Merton lacks a diverse corporate management team in terms of ethnicity and therefore is not representative of the residents within our borough.
- 2.3 A proposed timetable for Appointment Committee decisions is attached (Appendix two).
- 2.4 The consensus from all four head hunters who have expressed their interest in supporting this appointment is that the Director of Children Schools and Families vacancy be advertised with a salary in the range of £145k - £160k. This is consistent with recent appointments within the market for director level posts in London.
- 2.5 In addition, all four suppliers have advised that a pay offer of towards the top range of the salary may be required if an exceptional candidate is found but cannot be secured within the lower end of the salary range.
- 2.6 The full recruitment process will involve agreement of a longlist of candidates, who will then be put through a preliminary interview with a technical assessor. The technical assessor will be agreed by the Chief Executive after recommendations by the chosen head hunter. The recruitment process will then continue with agreement of a shortlist of candidates, who will then be put through psychometric profiling as agreed by the Chief Executive after recommendations by the chosen head hunter. This is standard practice for senior appointments. Shortlisted candidates will then be invited to the interview day, which will consist of a stakeholder interview, 1-1 meeting with the Chief Executive, an informal lunch with members of the Corporate Management Team and ending with the final panel interview, who will make the final appointment decision.
- 2.7 The stakeholder panel will include representatives from one of the borough's secondary schools, from one of the borough's primary schools, from one of the

borough's special schools, and then from Merton commissioning group, Police, care leavers, Merton Voluntary Service Council and Merton's safeguarding board.

3. **Financial, resource and property implications**

- 3.1 The costs of procuring the Director of Children Schools and Families can be found at Appendix three and are exempt from disclosure.

4. **Legal and statutory implications**

- 4.1 The recommendation contained within this report are designed to ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations to appoint staff on merit pursuant to the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. This means that the procedure should be capable of objective justification.
- 4.2 This post is covered by the Employee Procedure Rules (part 4H) of the constitution. The Appointments Committee or sub committee s responsible for appointing to the Director's post. Once the recruitment process is completed in accordance with the Council's recruitment procedures an offer of appointment cannot be made by the Appointments Committee until the Committee has notified the Chief Executive of the name of the person to whom the Committee wishes to make an offer. The Chief Executive is then to notify the details to every member of the Cabinet. The appointment will only be made where no material or well founded objections from the Cabinet have been received. Committee should therefore build this process into the recruitment planning.
- 4.3 In all other respects the process must comply with the Council's recruitment procedure.

5. **Human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications**

- 5.1 The contents of this report are designed to ensure that the Council's processes are human rights and equalities compliant.
- 5.2 It is unlawful to discriminate on grounds of gender, race, disability, age, religion and belief and sexual orientation. This refers to both direct and indirect discrimination. In effect the process has to be evaluated against three tests (1) intention (2) method (3) effect. Where there is an **intention** to discriminate on any of the prohibited grounds, this would be unlawful. Where there is no such intention but the recruitment **methods** used are discriminatory, then the outcome may be open to challenge. Where the intention and method are sound but the **effect** is shown to have disproportionate effect on a particular category of applicant then the outcome may be open to challenge.
- 5.3 Committee is invited to satisfy itself that the procedures operate as designed. Committee should therefore be satisfied that the advertisement and shortlisting and appointment criteria are objective in order to assist in objective justification of the final decision.

6. **Risk management and health and safety implications**

- 6.1 None

7. Appendices – the following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report

- 7.1 Appendix one: job description and person specification
- 7.2 Appendix two: proposed time table
- 7.3 Appendix three: Costs (exempt from disclosure)
- 7.4 Appendix four: summary of proposals (exempt from disclosure)
- 7.5 Appendix five: proposal from supplier 1 (exempt from disclosure)
- 7.6 Appendix six: proposal from supplier 2 (exempt from disclosure)
- 7.7 Appendix seven: proposal from supplier 3 (exempt from disclosure)
- 7.8 Appendix eight: proposal from supplier 4 (exempt from disclosure)

8. Background Papers – the following documents have been relied on in drawing up this report but do not form part of the report

- 8.1 None

9. Contacts

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10. Useful links

- 10.1 Merton Council's Web site: <http://www.merton.gov.uk>
- 10.2 Readers should note the terms of the legal information (disclaimer) regarding information on Merton Council's and third party linked websites.
- 10.3 <http://www.merton.gov.uk/legal.htm>
- 10.4 This disclaimer also applies to any links provided here.

Appendix one – job description and person specification



LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

CHILDREN, SCHOOLS & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: Director of Children, Schools & Families

Grade: Directors

DIVISION/SECTION: Director's Office

Location: Civic Centre

Responsible to: Chief Executive

Responsible for: Children Social Care and Youth Inclusion; Education Access, Opportunity & Inclusion; Early Years; Educational Services, Inspectors, Consultants & Governor Support; Online Research Services; Youth Offending Team; Youth Service and such other matters as may be added or changed from time to time.

Post number: M3007815

Date: November 2017

1. MAIN PURPOSE

- To be professionally responsible and accountable for the effectiveness, availability and value for money of the Council's statutory children's services and functions, specifically:
 - the Council's functions in its capacity as a local education authority under the Education Acts except certain functions relating to further education, higher education and adult education;
 - the Council's social services functions within the meaning of the Local Authorities Social Services Act 1970, insofar as they relate to children, and the Council's functions for children and young people leaving care;
 - any health related functions exercised by the Council on behalf of an NHS body under section 31 of the health Act 1999, insofar as they relate to children; and
 - the Council's functions as a children's services authority as set out in the Children Act 2004, in particular building and leading the arrangements for inter-agency co-operation.

- To ensure the development, implementation and evaluation of strategies for the provision of service and support that are responsive to client needs and are sufficiently dynamic to respond to changes in governmental direction and legislative change.

- To manage the provision of quality services that reflect the Authority's core values.

- To participate in the corporate management of the Authority.

2. MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Generic

- To participate in the corporate management of the Authority and to contribute to the preparation of both short and medium term plans for the Authority in close co-operation with others as required.

- To evaluate the performance of the Department against stated objectives, developing performance measures and ensuring feedback to staff on the department's performance in meeting targets and objectives.

- To ensure the development of a departmental organisational structure that meets changing service needs. To promote sound departmental management practices and to be responsible for the effective recruitment and retention, motivation and development of staff within in effective industrial relations climate.

- To ensure the development of effective working relationships between the department and others across the Council. To lead, and participate actively in inter-departmental working groups, as required.

Specific

- To provide accurate and timely advice to the Council, its committees, elected members, the Chief Executive and Directors, on developments, trends in the areas of children, schools and families services and all matters relating to the strategic planning of those services and their resourcing.
- To develop, implement and evaluate policies and programmes for the provision of cost-effective, high-quality services which accord with the Council's policy objectives and meet both statutory and local needs.
- To ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to promote cooperation between the Council and its partner organisations to improve the well being of children and young people in the Borough.
- To make arrangements to ensure that the Council's functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare.
- To maintain and develop productive links with schools headteachers and governors based on mutual respect, shared goals and shared responsibility for the improvement of standards within the Borough.
- To ensure that the Authority's statutory responsibilities in regard to such things as the provision of the school places, access, monitoring of standards and statements of children with special needs are met.
- To consider the establishment of, maintain and operate a database of basic information on all children and young people in the Borough or if another body has the statutory duty to create a database or databases, to participate in its operation.
- To chair the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) to coordinate board members' activities for the purpose of safeguarding the welfare of children and young people in the Borough.
- To promote the educational achievement of looked after children.
- To provide the Secretary of State, if so directed, with information on individual children and young people.
- To coordinate statements of proposed action in the light of a Joint Area Review report and to exercise a key role in monitoring and evaluating implementation of the proposed action (subject to consultation and the laying of Regulations).
- To create and sustain a framework for the effective delivery of services to children and young people through leadership and by creating the conditions for others to perform and to innovate.

- To lead the cultural, workforce and other changes necessary to secure the transformation of children's services.
 - To lead the transformation of children's services by creating a sharper focus on prevention and early intervention, while strengthening protection and improving achievement and attainment for all children and young people.
 - To build and lead robust partnership arrangements under which public, private voluntary and community sectors work effectively together in relation to the planning, commissioning and provision of services which improve outcomes for children and young people and place them at the centre of service provision.
 - To harness the distinctive contributions of children, young people and their families and carers in designing and delivering services and in evaluating how effectively services improve outcomes.
 - To direct the operation of the Council's contracted out and commissioned children's services provision through the establishment of suitable arrangements for performance management arrangements across all children's services.
 - To ensure that services are developed in close consultation with departments, the community, local action groups and external agencies and to promote public understanding of the Council's policies in order to facilitate their effective implementation and wider credibility. To develop effective relationships with the private and voluntary sectors and to encourage joint development initiatives wherever appropriate.
 - To represent the Authority to external agencies such as Government Departments, Local Authority Associations, private developers, etc to develop effective relationships to advance the Council's objectives.
 - To ensure the effective implementation of the Council's Equal Opportunity and Health and Safety policies in all aspects of the Department's work.
 - To act as nominated deputy in the absence of the Chief Executive and to undertake any other duties as directed by the Chief Executive.
3. The duties, roles and responsibilities of the post and the methods of working may be amended from time to time by the Chief Executive.



LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

CHILDREN, SCHOOLS & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

PERSON SPECIFICATION

POST TITLE: Director of Children, Schools & Families

Grade: Directors

Date: November 2017

1. Knowledge

- Educated to degree level and/or full relevant professional qualification, with evidence of continuous professional development.
- An understanding of the legislative framework governing the work of the department. Understanding of issues impacting on service delivery within an urban, multi cultural environment.
- A clear understanding of the workings of local government and the wider environment in which it operates.

2. Skills

- Ability to demonstrate a clear vision of the future for Local Authority children, schools and families services and the challenges facing those services in the short and medium term.
- Well developed analytical skills and proven ability of setting/achieving strategic objectives through performance management and of evaluating and achieving service quality.
- Ability to communicate effectively, negotiate and network through highly developed written, oral and presentation skills.
- Ability to develop innovative solutions whilst maintaining continuity of services through setting of clear goals/targets.
- Ability to lead, motivate and enthuse individuals and teams within a rapidly changing environment.
- Ability to work effectively within a political environment and to manage the member/officer interface.
- Commitment and ability to implement the Council's Equal Opportunities policies in employment and services.
- Commitment to working in partnership with a wide range of bodies both internally and externally.

3. Experience/Training

- Significant senior management experience in the provision of public sector children care and/or education services within a multi-racial urban community. Experience of participation at senior management level in the corporate affairs and decision making of a large complex organisation.
- A successful track record and background of consistent achievement at senior management level (second tier or above) in a local authority or other large complex organisation.
- Experience of managing, motivating and developing a multi-disciplinary workforce and harnessing the talents of employees at all levels.
- Experience of successfully leading management of change within a service setting.

- Experience of working in co-operation and partnership with a wide range of internal and external bodies including statutory agencies/organisations.
- Experience of having successfully managed substantial budgets through rigorous control procedures, as well as delivering budget options within a corporate framework.
- Experience of establishing and implementing business planning processes and performance management systems to ensure appropriate and cost effective service delivery.

4. Others

- Successful Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Appendix two – overview of recruitment timetable

Detailed Briefing Meeting	End of w/c 30 th November (after Appointment Committee meeting)
Preparing the adverts, JD's and microsite	Ongoing
Job Advertised and Search goes live	w/c 11 th January (advert in MJ 14 th January)
Closing date	w/c 8 th February
Longlist Meeting	w/c 15 th February
Preliminary Interviews	w/c 22 nd February or w/c 1 st March carried out by executive search agent
Shortlist meeting	w/c 8 th March
Final Panel and Assessments	w/c 15 th or 22 nd March