

## **BOROUGH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD**

### **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at the Executive Meeting Room - Town Hall on 29 August 2018 at 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillors M. A. Brunt, J. E. Durrant, J. M. Ellacott and Mrs. J. S. Bray

#### **13. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor J. Durrant be elected Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

#### **14. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor J. Ellacott be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

#### **15. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed.

#### **16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor N. Harrison, substituted for by Councillor J. Bray, and from Councillor R. Mill.

#### **17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

John Jones, Interim Head of Legal, declared an interest in Agenda Item 6 – Appointment of Interim Monitoring Officer, in that the report recommended his appointment to the position. He therefore left the meeting for the duration of his potential appointment being discussed.

#### **18. APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER**

The committee considered the report of the Chief Executive, detailing the Council's duty to appoint a Monitoring Officer and the requirements of the position. A full list of the position's responsibilities and delegated powers was attached as an annex to the report. Mr John Jones left the meeting for the duration of the discussion regarding his potential appointment as interim Monitoring Officer.

The committee noted Mr Jones' experience in a range of governance and legal roles. It was noted that Mr Jones would be in post on an interim basis, and therefore would only be in a position to fulfil the role of Monitoring Officer for this interim period. The Leader and Chief Executive indicated that they believed Mr Jones would be well suited to fulfil the role.

The committee agreed to recommend to Council that Mr Jones be appointed as the Council's interim Monitoring Officer, to cover the period until such time as a permanent appointment was made. It was noted that this recommendation would be considered by Full Council on 27 September. Following this agreement, Mr Jones re-joined the meeting for the subsequent discussion.

The committee discussed and considered the future requirements for the permanent Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer roles, to ensure that the holder(s) of these roles would be best able to support the requirements and objectives of the Council. The committee also discussed the general future governance requirements of the Council which might be associated with the work of these roles.

It was identified that there was a desire for the Council's governance work to drive excellence in decision making, by supporting committees and councillors to make the best decisions possible in an effective and transparent manner. It was identified that it was therefore hoped that future holders of senior governance roles would be able to support the Council acting in a proactive and coordinated manner in these areas.

It was identified that in order to best deliver the Council's governance ambitions, strong leadership would be required from both Members and officers to support these objectives. It was identified that holders of senior governance roles would need to have awareness of both legal requirements and the demands of local governance, the ability to effectively advise Members and officers around contentious issues, including when this advice might be contrary to existing preferences, and the ability to consider both the strategic and operational priorities of the role.

It was noted that a range of options were being considered for the delivery model of the Council's legal services activities, but that any supported options would be required to ensure that the Council was able to deliver a high quality service, and that appropriate resourcing was provided to deliver this objective. It was noted that not all elements of the Council's legal activities would need to be undertaken in-house in order to support an effective service. It was identified that it was hoped that the permanent Head of Legal Services would be able to engage with the development of the Council's legal services team, within the framework established to best deliver the Council's objectives.

It was noted that the Employment Committee's role included the consideration of the appointment of the Head of Paid Service and Statutory Officers of the Council. The Leader of the Council requested a meeting with the Interim Head of Legal Services regarding the workings of the Committee.

**RECOMMENDED that, in accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Mr John Jones be confirmed as the Council's Monitoring Officer on an interim basis, until such a time as a permanent appointment has been made.**

**Reason for decision:** To comply with the requirements of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 (as amended).

**Alternative Options:** To appoint another Officer of the Council.

**19. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

The Meeting closed at 7.38 pm