

REPORT TO: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 20 December 2016

BY: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Appointment to the Post of Head of Service (Education)

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise Council of the decision of the Chief Officer and Head Teacher Appointments Sub-Committee to appoint Fiona Robertson to the post of Head of Service (Education).

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the decision of the Chief Officer and Head Teacher Appointments Sub-Committee to appoint Fiona Robertson as Head of Service (Education).
- 2.2 To advise Council that following receipt of satisfactory pre-employment checks Fiona Robertson was offered the post and has subsequently confirmed her acceptance. Mrs Robertson's commencement date has still to be agreed with her current employer.
- 2.3 To note the minute of the Chief Officer and Head Teacher Appointments Sub-Committee held on 29 November 2016 for the appointment of the Head of Service (Education) (Appendix 1).

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An external recruitment campaign to recruit to the vacant post of Head of Service (Education) post ran from Wednesday 26 October until midnight on Thursday 10 November 2016. Five applications were received.
- 3.2 A cross-party/Elected Member/Chief Officer and Head Teacher Appointments Sub-Committee was established in accordance with Council's Standing Orders and charged with making an appointment to the permanent post of Head of Service (Education). The Sub-Committee comprised:

Cllr Willie Innes (Chair)
Cllr Shamin Akhtar
Cllr Peter MacKenzie

- 3.3 The Sub-Committee was advised by Council officials: Angela Leitch, Chief Executive; Alex McCrorie, Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services); Sue Cormack, Service Manager – HR and Payroll Services; and Peter Hay, the Independent HR Adviser, who provided advice throughout the recruitment campaign, candidate selection and the candidate interview process.
- 3.4 The Sub-Committee met on 14 November 2016 to consider longleet recommendations made by the Independent HR Adviser. Two candidates were selected for longleet and interviews took place on Wednesday 16 November 2016. The interviews were conducted by the Independent HR Adviser in conjunction with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services) and Service Manager – HR and Payroll Services.
- 3.5 The Independent HR Adviser presented his feedback on the longleet interviews and recommendations for shortleet to the Sub-Committee on 18 November. The Sub-Committee confirmed one candidate to go forward for shortleet.
- 3.6 The candidate completed a series of online psychometric tests prior to their formal interview; the tests were designed to assess their leadership skills, personality and situational judgement. The process was undertaken by Kiel Management Centre and an outcome-based report on candidate's assessments was prepared by their lead psychologist. The report was discussed with the Independent HR Adviser who shared the findings with the Sub-Committee following the formal interview on the 29 November 2016 to help inform their decision making.
- 3.7 The candidate, in addition, met with a Young People's Panel prior to the formal interview. The panel comprised pupils from two of East Lothian's primary schools and two from secondary schools and was chaired by a Principal Education Officer. During the course of the meeting, which lasted approximately half an hour, the candidate was asked a number of questions relating to the post following which the responses were collated by the Chair. The Panel presented their feedback to the Sub-Committee after the formal interview on the 29 November to help inform their decision making.
- 3.8 The formal competency based interview took place on 29 November 2016. Immediately prior to the interview, the candidate was given 45 minutes to prepare a short report on *'how they would embrace the Education challenges facing councils in 2017 and what would be their key priorities to ensure these challenges are met'* which they then presented to the Sub-Committee at the beginning of the formal interview. Thereafter, the candidate was asked a number of pre-set competency based interview questions. The Sub-Committee was advised by Peter Hay, Independent HR Adviser, Depute Chief

Executive (Partnerships and Community Services), Monica Patterson, and Service Manager – HR and Payroll Services, Sue Cormack.

- 3.9 Following the interview, taking full account of the candidate’s performance in relation to the competency based interview and presentation and the feedback from the psychologist and the Young People’s Panel, the Sub-Committee unanimously determined that Fiona Robertson was the preferred candidate for the post of Head of Service (Education).
- 3.10 The relevant pre-employment checks were carried out and found to be satisfactory, following which a formal offer was made to Fiona Robertson which she has formally accepted. Mrs Robertson will take up the post at a date to be agreed with her current employer. A minute of the meeting of the Sub-Committee which conducted the interviews for the post on 29 November 2016 (Appendix 1) is presented for noting.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In accordance with standing orders of East Lothian Council, Fiona Roberson has become East Lothian Council Head of Service (Education).

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - None
- 6.2 Personnel – None
- 6.3 Other - None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None

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DATE	December 2016

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CHIEF OFFICER AND HEAD TEACHER APPOINTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE
For the Post of
HEAD OF SERVICE (EDUCATION)**

Held on 29TH November 2016

PROVOST'S BOARDROOM, JOHN MUIR HOUSE, HADDINGTON

Chief Officer and Head Teacher Appointments Sub-Committee:

Councillor Willie Innes (Chair)
Councillor Shamin Akhtar
Councillor Peter Mackenzie

In Attendance:

Peter Hay, External Independent HR Adviser

Council Officials:

Angela Leitch, Chief Executive
Alex McCrorie, Depute Chief Executive – Resources and People Services
Sue Cormack, Service Manager - HR and Payroll

Candidates began their interview by giving a ten minute presentation to the Sub-Committee setting out “ ***how they would embrace the Education challenges facing Councils in 2017 and what would be their key priorities to ensure these challenges are met***” should they be appointed to the post. This was followed by a series of set competency based questions from Sub-Committee Members.

At the end of the formal interview the Sub-Committee discussed the relative merits of the candidate with assistance from Mr Hay, the Chief Executive and Depute Chief Executive - Resources and People Services following which Peter Hay presented to the Sub-Committee an overview on the outcome of the online assessments exercise undertaken by the candidate following which the Young People's Panel gave feedback on their discussions with the candidate both of which helped inform the Sub-Committee's final deliberations. The Sub-Committee then proceeded to score the candidate. Fiona Robertson scored highly in both the presentation topic and in all of the competency questions posed and was accordingly declared to be the preferred candidate.

The Service Manager - HR and Payroll explained that the usual pre-employment checks on the preferred candidate would be carried out prior to formal appointment.