

# APPOINTMENTS PANEL

## AGENDA



**Friday 20 June 2025**

**at 10.30 am**

**in Committee Room C**

### MEMBERS: APPOINTMENTS PANEL:

Councillors Buchan, Hargreaves, Harrison, Little, Morley, Oliver, Thompson and 1 Vacancy.

Councillor Morley, Chair of Children's Services Committee (already part of membership)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
3. **MINUTES**
  - 3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2025
4. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**
  - 4.1 Appointment of Executive Director of Children's Services – *Managing Director*
5. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**



# **APPOINTMENTS PANEL**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

**6 May 2025**

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

**Present:**

Councillor: Carole Thompson (In the Chair)

Councillors: Bob Buchan, Moss Boddy, Brenda Harrison and Phil Holbrook  
Councillor Rachel Creevy, Chair of Children's Services Committee

Officers: Denise McGuckin, Managing Director  
Hayley Martin, Director of Legal, Governance and Human Resources  
Gillian Laight, Human Resources Manager  
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services and Legal Support Officer

### **17. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sue Little.

### **18. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **19. Minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2024**

Confirmed.

### **20. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006**

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**Minute 21 – Appointment of Executive Director of Children's Services**  
– *Managing Director* – This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local

Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely information relating to a particular employee, former employee or applicant to become an employee of the Council (paras 1 and 3).

## 21. **Appointment of Executive Director of Children's**

**Servies** (*Managing Director*) This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely information relating to a particular employee, former employee or applicant to become an employee of the Council (para 1 and 3 )

### **Purpose of report**

To consider and agree the arrangements for the recruitment and selection process for the post of Executive Director of Children's Services.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Managing Director presented a report which provided the background to the requirement for the recruitment and selection process to be undertaken. In addition, the proposed recruitment process was outlined for Members' consideration.

Further details can be found in the exempt section of the minutes.

The meeting returned to open session.

The Chair confirmed that the timetable for the recruitment and selection process for the Executive Director of Children's Services along with the method and advertising of the post had been agreed.

### **Decision**

Further details can be found in the exempt section of the minutes.

The meeting concluded at 4.30 pm

CHAIR

# APPOINTMENTS PANEL

20 June 2025



**Report of:** Managing Director

**Subject:** APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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## 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To enable Members to shortlist the candidates to be interviewed for the above post and to agree the presentation topic and interview questions.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the Appointments Panel meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025 Members approved the recommendation to proceed with the recruitment to the post of Executive Director of Children's Services. The decision was taken to use Gatenby Sanderson for Executive Search with the advert being published on the North East Jobs Recruitment Portal and in the MJ on 15<sup>th</sup> May with a closing date of 13<sup>th</sup> June 2025.
- 2.2 The closing date was set for 13<sup>th</sup> June 2025 to provide an appropriate timeframe for Gatenby Sanderson to approach and engage with potential applicants, for applicants to consider the post and prepare applications. The advert made it clear that technical and stakeholder interviews will take place on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025 and the formal interview with Elected Members will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025. Candidates for this level of position will be required to give at least two months' notice and typically three months' notice.
- 2.3 Details of the candidate applications and shortlist report for the post will be circulated as soon as practical after the closing date to enable Members to agree a shortlist of candidates. The following documents support this process:
  - **Appendix A** – Approved timetable
  - **Appendix B** – Job Description
  - **Appendix C** – Person Specification
  - **Appendix D** – Candidate applications and shortlist report (to follow)
  - **Appendix E** – Potential interview questions and presentation topic

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 It is recommended that Members:

- i) Approve those candidates to be invited for interview on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025.
- ii) Approve the presentation topic for the post detailed in confidential Appendix E or determine alternative proposal.
- iii) Note potential questions for the post in confidential Appendix E to enable Members to determine the questions to be asked at interview.

### **4. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 To agree the shortlist of candidates to be interviewed.

### **5. CONTACT DETAILS**

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Human Resources Manager  
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**APPROVED TIMETABLE**

<b>Recruitment Process</b>	<b>Date</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Appointments Panel	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
Advert Published	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
Closing Date (4 weeks from advert release)	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Appointments Panel (Shortlisting)	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Technical and Stakeholder Interviews	Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2025
Appointments Panel / Final Interviews -Presentation -Questions	Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2025

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Departmental Management Team**

<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>
<b>DIVISION:</b>	<b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>
<b>GRADE:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE TO:</b>	<b>MANAGING DIRECTOR</b>
<b>POST REFERENCE:</b>	<b>101015</b>

### **Purpose of Post**

To have professional responsibility for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of the local authority children's services with responsibility for securing the provision of services which address the needs of all children and young people, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families and carers. To be responsible for the performance of local authority functions relating to the education and social care of children and young people and ensuring that effective systems are in place for discharging these functions.

### **Key Relationships**

- Managing Director
- Executive Leadership and Senior Management Teams
- Departmental Management Team
- Children, young people, their families and carers
- Children's workforce
- Colleagues from partner organisations including those in statutory, voluntary independent and faith sector

### **Main Duties and Responsibilities**

Operating as the council's designated 'Executive Director of Children's Services' (DCS) provide strategic leadership and direction to the functions and services associated Children Services across the Council.

Discharge the statutory duties of the Executive Director of Children's Services as follows:

- Provide leadership, oversight, management and delivery of children's social care services operating in a multi-agency context to meet the Council's legal and

statutory obligations and ensuring the community has access to high quality children's services that reduce the need for statutory intervention.

- Provide leadership to a range of early intervention and family help services for children in accordance with legislation, statutory guidance, policy and procedures working with partners to meet need as it emerges and prevent harm.
- Promote education excellence, ensuring a high quality supply of school places, co-ordinate fair admissions and promote attendance and inclusion throughout Hartlepool Schools.
- Identify, lead and commission strategies to deliver the Council's vision for the provision of services to 0-25 year olds with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and ensure that the needs of the local community are met.
- Ensure that early years services are designed and delivered to the highest standards and within legislative requirements; whilst providing value for money and maximising available resources.
- Champion the interests of parents, families and vulnerable children and young people across all related services.
- Provide a clear line of accountability for Children's Services, promoting leadership in improving outcomes for all children and securing the provision of services which address children's and young people.
- To work in partnership with head teachers, school governors and academy trusts, and others, and support the drive for high education standards for all children and young people in Hartlepool.
- Ensure the leadership and strategic management of the service, setting policy, strategy and performance targets across the range of provisions for children, young people and families and makes changes to improve their outcomes and lived experience.
- Fulfil the Councils' statutory responsibilities in respect of partnership working and safeguarding arrangements including fulfilling the role of the Designated Safeguarding Partner on behalf of the Council and participate fully in the leadership of the Hartlepool, and Stockton Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Work closely with all Council departments and other external partners to ensure effective and integrated mechanisms are in place to support vulnerable children transitioning to adulthood.
- Develop and lead a culture of continuous improvement and customer focus within services, setting targets, managing and monitoring performance and putting in place improvement plans that provide value for money, cost effective systems and improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Take lead responsibility for the regulation and inspection of Children's Services in Hartlepool and ensure services are delivered in accordance with legislation, regulation and expected standards.
- Develop and foster effective relationships, communication and involvement of other services, partners and stakeholders, to ensure the provision and delivery of integrated services. To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of partnership arrangements to ensure they are efficient and achieve the agreed outcomes.



- Provide high quality and timely advice to Elected Members, Regulators, senior leadership colleagues and other stakeholders/partners on best practice, external factors affecting Children's services, legislative changes; and any issues relating to Council services which have a children's service related impact on the Council.
- Provide strong, effective leadership to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of services within the resources available, and in line with priorities and the budget as outlined within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- Develop robust governance and control, performance management and reporting, which supports effective decision making and delivers assurance.
- Lead on service user/children and young people involvement in order to meet the diversity of local needs and achieve a more customer- centred service delivery model.
- Secure the effective development of initiatives and funds to enable change and improvement in services.
- Contribute to the overall management of the Council by actively contributing to the setting and implementation of the Council's overall strategic vision, direction, policies and objectives ensuring that the Council continually improves and delivers high quality services meeting the changing needs of our customers and partners.
- Represent the Council at regional and national networking forums; keeping abreast of latest research and best practice.
- Provide effective and engaging leadership, acting with openness, honesty and integrity and instilling a clear sense of direction, priority and pace.

### Changes

Over time Council services change and develop. This can impact upon the main duties and responsibilities of the role, and subsequently the post holder, who will be required to adapt. Any changes will be appropriate to the grading of the post and will be made in discussion with the post holder.

Date: 14 April 2025

**HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL IS COMMITTED TO SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS. IF THIS POST IS SUBJECT TO SAFER RECRUITMENT MEASURES THEN A DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECK WILL BE REQUIRED.**

**PERSON SPECIFICATION: Executive Director of Children's Services      POST REFERENCE: 101015**

**HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL IS COMMITTED TO SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS. IF THIS POST IS SUBJECT TO SAFER RECRUITMENT MEASURES THEN A DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECK WILL BE REQUIRED.**

REQUIREMENTS	ESSENTIAL CRITERIA Please indicate in brackets after each criteria how this will be verified i.e. (F), (I), (T), (R)	DESIRABLE CRITERIA Please indicate in brackets after each criteria how this will be verified i.e. (F), (I), (T), (R)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Educational/vocational/occupational qualifications and/or training</b></li> <li>- <b>Specific qualifications (or equivalents)</b></li> </ul>	<p>A degree or relevant equivalent professional qualification (F, I, R)</p> <p>Management or Leadership Qualification (F, I, R)</p> <p>Evidence of Continuing Professional Development (F, I, R)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Work or other relevant experience</b></li> </ul>	<p>A proven track record of consistent and demonstrable senior management leadership and achievement within the field of children's services with a full understanding of the legal and regulatory framework and issues facing children, young people and their families (F, I)</p> <p>A demonstrable track record of leading, motivating and managing services to achieve high performance, sustainable service improvements and outstanding results through internal and external partnerships (F, I)</p>	

	<p>Knowledge and understanding of Children's Services' national agenda; including knowledge of relevant regulatory and inspection frameworks and the ability to translate this into local solutions. (F,I)</p> <p>Experience of promoting and sustaining a culture that meets the needs of and engages staff within a safe open and high performing working environment (F, I)</p> <p>Evidence of establishing and sustaining performance management arrangements to drive continuous improvement including service planning, target setting, performance appraisal and the management of diverse staff groups (F, I)</p> <p>A track record of working in and forging successful partnerships with a wide range of internal and external bodies including other local authorities, statutory, private, voluntary and community sector organisations (F, I)</p> <p>Experience of strategic planning and service delivery with demonstrable and proven record of achievement. This will include experience of developing and implementing planning, commissioning and performance frameworks in a multi-disciplinary and partnership environment.</p> <p>Evidence of working effectively within a political environment providing clear balanced advice and</p>	
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	<p>guidance on issues that achieve the service objectives (F, I)</p> <p>Experience of budget planning, management and control (F, I)</p>	
<p>- <b>Skills, abilities, knowledge and competencies</b></p>	<p>Ability to contribute effectively to the corporate management of the Council and instil a sense of ownership amongst others with regard to corporate strategies, standards and priorities. (F,I)</p> <p>Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to establish positive working relationships with government officials, professional and other regional organisations, elected members, partners, community and employees to generate confidence, trust and respect. (F,I)</p> <p>Ability to provide visible and supportive leadership to empower, enable, motivate and develop the workforce fostering a positive organisational culture. (F,I)</p> <p>Experience and ability to think and act strategically and systemically, drive service improvement and demonstrate and apply innovative solutions and ideas to improve working practices and service delivery. (F,I)</p> <p>Ability to lead multi-disciplinary staff at all levels, including during periods of substantial change and to achieve highly accountable performance. (F,I)</p> <p>Ability to operate effectively within the democratic process, with the political acumen and skills to develop</p>	<p>Media responses and interviews</p>

	<p>productive working relationships with elected members based on respect, trust and confidence. (F, I)</p> <p>Ability to lead and manage change and develop services whilst maintaining consistency with corporate values and ethics. (F,I)</p> <p>Ability to optimise service performance and delivery ensuring efficient and effective use of the available resources (F, I)</p> <p>Ability to lead and manage change in multi-disciplinary and complex environments leading to sustainable transformational change and service improvements. (F,I)</p> <p>Maintain focus on strategic and long term issues which inform operational service delivery in context of the organisation's strategic and operational capacity (F, I)</p> <p>Create a supportive learning and development environment where a culture of learning is promoted and constructive feedback on the service provided is encouraged (F, I)</p> <p>Ability to make difficult decisions in a challenging environment with solution focused, problem solving, evidence based decision making approach (F, I)</p> <p>An inspirational and effective communicator (F, I)</p> <p>A proven ability to successfully manage complex budgets in a tight financial situation. (F, I)</p>	
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- <b>General competencies</b>	<p>An effective leader who is energetic, determined, positive, fair and resilient enough to cope with the demands of the role (F, I)</p> <p>An enthusiastic and effective individual with a strong commitment to improving performance and ensuring the service meet the needs of the communities it serves (F, I)</p> <p>A positive role model promoting high standards of ethical behaviour, probity, integrity and honesty with credibility across a wide range of audiences and respect for all (F, I)</p> <p>An innovator and motivator who can promote new and creative thinking and a corporate focus to achieving Council's objectives and continuous improvement, best value, service excellence and equal opportunities (F, I)</p> <p>A persuasive and effective influencer who can develop partnerships work collaboratively across boundaries and achieve performance and results through others (F, I)</p>	
<b>ESSENTIAL / DESIRABLE CRITERIA WILL BE VERIFIED BY: F = FORM I = INTERVIEW T = TEST(S) R = REFERENCE(S)</b>		

### **On-going Training Requirements**

The post holder will be required to undertake the following mandatory/essential training at the frequency indicated.

<b>Mandatory/Essential Training</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Children's Safeguarding Data Protection	Three yearly Three yearly

Please note all appointments within Hartlepool Borough Council are subject to a declaration of medical fitness by the Council's Occupational Health Service (having made reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act (2010) where necessary.

# APPOINTMENTS PANEL

20<sup>th</sup> June 2025



**Report of:** Managing Director

**Subject:** INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS – DEVELOPMENT,  
NEIGHBOURHOOD'S AND REGULATORY  
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider and agree interim arrangements following the resignation of the Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services has recently submitted his notice having been appointed to a senior role with Durham County Council. His final day working for Hartlepool will be 20 June 2025.
- 2.2 Discussions have been ongoing regarding the future senior management structure however until the final structure is agreed, interim arrangements are required to ensure the services are managed appropriately.

## 3. PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 It is proposed that in the short term, that existing Chief Officers undertake 'additional responsibilities' within the current directorate of Development, Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services providing service continuity and stability pending confirmation of the final structure e.g. Assistant Director for Neighbourhoods and the Assistant Director for Regulatory services will jointly act up in the Director role and be awarded appropriately. Providing me with time to work on a final structure. All proposals are subject to consultation with the relevant Chief Officers to enable them to consider and confirm if they will accept or decline the opportunity.
- 3.2 For the proposed final structure I have considered the Council Plan 2030, adopted by Finance & Policy Committee March 2025, and to ensure that we deliver services which meet the needs of our community now and improve



Hartlepool for future generations. Our vision for the future of Hartlepool in 2030

*Hartlepool will be*

*... a place where people live healthier, safe and independent lives (PEOPLE);*

*... a place that is connected, sustainable, clean and green (PLACE);*

*... a place that is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all (POTENTIAL);*

*... a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community (ORGANISATION).*

- 3.3 Therefore I propose to realign services under People, Place, Potential and the Organisation providing stability within the organisation and sustainability going forwards.

This will involve the removal of the existing Executive Director for Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services and introducing new chief officer positions and making changes to current directorates: -

- Director of Neighbourhoods & Regulatory Services
- Director of Housing, Growth and Communities

- 3.4 As a temporary measure I intend to seek expressions of interest from Chief Officers for these new roles on an interim basis, enabling me to work with them and other Directors to determine which services are best placed under each Director. Once this is confirmed we will operate for a period to make sure nothing is broken before presenting a final fully funded structure to members for endorsement later in the calendar year. I believe this is essential to understand the full implications of making fundamental changes and delivering on our Council plan ambitions. This can be undertaken in line with the Councils constitution which states that *“in consultation with the chair of Finance & Corporate Affairs Committee and the Chair of the Committee responsible for the relevant service area along with that Director, the determination of Departmental staffing proposals, where service areas are being amalgamated or disaggregated or service area is created, modified or deleted due to changes in grant/external funding.”*

- 3.5 In the current structure the Director for Public Health reports to the Director of Children Services and myself as Managing Director, which Members have agreed at a previous Appointments panel needs to change following the resignation of the previous DCS. Therefore, I propose the DPH will report to the Director for Adult Services and myself, which is in line with many local authorities across the country.

I will also take responsibility for Communications and Marketing and Corporate Strategy.

The Director of Finance, IC & Digital Services will take on the responsibility of Procurement and strategic data and intelligence and will transfer Revenues and Benefits from the AD for Digital, Data and Technology to the AD for Finance.

- 3.6 In accordance with the Single Status Agreement the additional duties in addition to their existing duties will be entitled to an additional payment, which will be determined between myself, the Director of Human Resources, Legal and Governance in line with the Council's pay policy.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Panel considers and agrees the following:

- To approve the acting up arrangements in the short term.
- To note the proposed interim arrangements referred to in paragraph 3.4.
- To note the proposed changes referred to in paragraphs 3.5.
- To delegate authority to the Managing Director to arrange additional payment for undertaking the additional duties.

#### **5. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 Under Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Head of Paid Service holds a statutory responsibility for the overall management and organisation of the local authority's staff and structure. This includes making proposals to the Council on the manner in which the discharge of its functions is coordinated, the number and grade of staff required, and the organisation and proper management of those staff. In fulfilling this duty, the Head of Paid Service plays a critical role in ensuring that the authority's structure is fit for purpose, aligned with strategic objectives, and capable of delivering efficient and effective services. This function must be exercised impartially and in the best interests of the authority as a whole, with a focus on organisational capability, accountability, and value for public money.

#### **6. CONTACT DETAILS**

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