

REPORT TO: Council

DATE: 9 July 2025

REPORTING OFFICER: Head of HR Operations

PORTFOLIO: Leader's Portfolio

SUBJECT: Recommendation of the Appointments Committee for the appointment to the post of Interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Services.

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 Following the announcement of the Council's incumbent Chief Executive to step down from the post, the Council opened up an expression of Interest opportunity for Executive Directors and Directors for the post of Interim Chief Executive. A thorough recruitment process followed.

1.2 Within the Council's Constitution, Appendix 4, relating to the Powers and Duties of Committee's, it directs that the Appointments Committee is;

To deal with Appointments, Disciplinary Matters and Dismissals relating to the Head of Paid Service, Strategic Directors, Directors, and the Director (Legal and Democratic Services) as set out in the Officer Employment Procedure Rules and subject to the Standing Orders relating to Staff

1.3 Within the Council's Constitution, Section 3(a) of the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, which form a part of the Standing Orders Relating to Staff, stipulates as follows;

The full Council will appoint the Head of Paid Service on recommendation from the Council's Appointments Committee

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

1) the report be noted; and

2) Council considers the recommendation of the Appointments Committee and appoints Mr. Richard Rout as Interim Chief Executive with effect from 1st September 2025 until the date the new Chief Executive commences in post.

3) The Interim Chief Executive has;

- a) the full authority of the Chief Executive with effect from 1st September 2025 until the date the new permanent Chief Executive commences in post**
- b) the full authority to exercise the delegations of the Chief Executive with effect from 1st September 2025 until the date the new permanent Chief Executive commences in post**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 For ease of reading and the avoidance of doubt, the Chief Executive of Halton Borough is the Head of Paid Services. The term 'Head of Paid Services' is used within legislation, the Council's Constitution, Employment Terms and Conditions, and sector specific publications. Where used in this report, it should be taken to mean 'Chief Executive'
- 3.2 The expression of interest closed on 06th June 2025. Following a review of applications for the interim post, the Appointments Committee invited the applicants to interview, at a meeting of the Appointments Committee, on 12th June 2025.
- 3.6 The meeting of the Appointments Committee on 12th June 2025 is intended to thoroughly assess the candidates and determine a preferred candidate to be recommended to Council for appointment to the role.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The process outlined in section 3 above is compliant with the Council's policy pertaining to the recruitment and appointment of a Chief Executive, as set out in the Council's Constitution.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The current salary of the Chief Executive post (£167,539 to £180,269 2025/26 - pay award pending) has been market tested. This is to continue to be covered by Council revenue budget.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The Chief Executive has overarching responsibility for the delivery of this priority on behalf of the Council.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The Chief Executive has overarching responsibility for the delivery of this priority on behalf of the Council.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The Chief Executive has overarching responsibility for the delivery of this priority on behalf of the Council.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The Chief Executive has overarching responsibility for the delivery of this priority on behalf of the Council.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The Chief Executive has overarching responsibility for the delivery of this priority on behalf of the Council.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The Chief Executive is the principle adviser to the political leadership of the Council, its Executive, and the elected Council as a whole. In addition, the post-holder is the key link to the Combined Authority, neighbouring Councils, regional Government agencies, central Government departments and Ministers. Within the organisation the Chief Executive has authority over all other employees of the council, sets organisational policy direction, and oversees the discharging of statutory responsibilities. It is by definition a necessary position in the Council's staffing structure.

7.2 The risk attached to not appointing a new Interim Chief Executive would place the Council in a precarious position as it would be operating day to day on temporary arrangements. This cannot be sustained for a prolonged period as it would likely create uncertainty and instability in leadership, policy direction, and the Council's position amongst its key stakeholders.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The Council's recruitment process is up to date and robust. The Interim Chief Executive recruitment process has been a tailored variation of the Council's established recruitment procedure. That procedure has been subject to Equality Impact Assessment.

- 8.2 No candidate was treated less favourably than any other. Any adjustments to the process were offered to all candidates.
- 8.3 If a successful candidate requires any adjustments in order to perform the duties of the role, these will be considered and applied in accordance with Council policy and prevailing legislation.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act.