

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 29 October 2019

**BY:** Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services)

**SUBJECT:** Resignation of Chief Executive

---

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To inform Council of the resignation of Angela Leitch from the post of Chief Executive of East Lothian Council to take up a position as Chief Executive of Public Health Scotland. Her last day of employment with East Lothian is to be 26 November 2019.
- 1.2 To advise Council of the arrangements for the forthcoming recruitment campaign to secure a new Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service for East Lothian Council and to ask Council to appoint the members of the Sub-Committee.
- 1.3 To ask Council to approve the interim arrangements to be put in place following the Chief Executive's departure and prior to the new Chief Executive taking up post
- 1.4 To ask Council to agree the interim appointment of a new Returning Officer for East Lothian with immediate effect.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Council is recommended to note the content of this report.
- 2.2 Council is asked to approve the appointment of Alex McCrorie as Acting Chief Executive from the date of the current Chief Executive's departure until a new Chief Executive has been appointed and takes up the post.
- 2.3 Council is asked to appoint the Council Leader, the Provost, Councillor Henderson, Councillor Currie and Councillor Dugdale to act as the Appointments Sub-Committee
- 2.4 Council is recommended to approve the appointment of Jim Lamond, Head of Council Resources as the interim Returning Officer for East

Lothian and to approve the necessary change to the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 On 18 September 2019, Angela Leitch, Chief Executive, submitted her written resignation to the Council Leader giving notice of her intention to leave to take up a new post as the Chief Executive of Public Health Scotland. The Council Leader has accepted Mrs Leitch's resignation.
- 3.2 The Local Government and Housing Act 1969, Section 4, requires the Council to designate a person as "Head of Paid Service". This statutory function is carried out by the Chief Executive.
- 3.3 The Council Leader has instructed the Head of Council Resources supported by the Service Manager – People and Governance to progress arrangements to appoint a new Chief Executive. A recruitment campaign has started with a view to securing the appointment of a permanent Chief Executive and although every effort is being made to make early progress it is nevertheless not possible for any new Chief Executive to take up the appointment immediately following the departure of the current Chief Executive. Interim arrangements will therefore be required.
- 3.4 Alex McCrorie, Depute Chief Executive – People and Resources, has made it known that he does not wish to apply for the permanent post of Chief Executive and has formally advised of his intention to retire following the new Chief Executive taking up their position. He is therefore appropriately and fittingly placed to act as interim Chief Executive from the date of the current Chief Executive's departure until the new Chief Executive takes up their post, and he has indicated that he is willing to do so. Council is therefore asked to appoint Mr McCrorie as Acting Chief Executive for that currently open-ended period.
- 3.5 Neither the current Chief Executive nor Mr McCrorie feel that it is appropriate for them to act as the Returning Officer for East Lothian, although that is a role that traditionally sits with the Chief Executive. Should an election be called they each feel that an officer who can see through the process, including the work that follows any election, should be appointed to that role at this point. Jim Lamond, Head of Council Resources has acted as the Depute Returning Officer for East Lothian for many years and, in the circumstances, Council is asked to appoint him as the interim Returning Officer for East Lothian until a new Chief Executive is in post at which time it is anticipated that a further report will be brought to Council seeking their appointment as the Returning Officer.
- 3.6 The recruitment of the new Chief Executive will follow the Chief Official appointments process and the appointment will therefore be made by the Chief Officer and Head Teacher Appointments Sub-Committee in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Administration. It is proposed

that the cross party Sub-Committee will comprise the Council Leader, the Provost, Councillor Henderson, Councillor Currie and Councillor Dugdale.

3.7 Following consultation with Group Leaders, the Council has commissioned SOLACE in Business to assist with design of the recruitment process and they will also provide training, advice and guidance to the Sub-Committee supported by the Head of Council Resources (who has intimated he does not intend to apply for the post) and the Service Manager – People and Governance.

3.8 Campaign materials are currently being gathered for publication on a microsite to which candidates will be directed on application. The timetable for the recruitment and selection process is:

Recruitment campaign opens	22 October 2019
Recruitment campaign closes	12 November 2019
Long list meeting	18 November 2019
Short listed candidates Assessment Centre day	9 December 2019
Formal interviews	13 December 2019
Latest offer to preferred candidate	16 December 2019

Pre-employment checks will then have to be carried out including the taking up of references. Most external candidates at this level would also require to give approximately three months contractual notice once any formal offer has been issued although that can be negotiable depending on circumstances. It is therefore possible that the new Chief Executive may not be able to take up the post until April 2020.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None

#### **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 – The cost of the Solace in Business support plus any outlays estimated to be in the region of £16,000 will be met from within the existing staffing budget for the Chief Executive.

6.2 Personnel - The terms and conditions of employment applicable to the post of Chief Executive are enshrined within the SJC Conditions of Service for Chief Officials and the salary is nationally determined with other local terms and conditions applying in accordance with East Lothian Council's standard employment policies. People and Governance will coordinate and administer the entire recruitment and selection process, reporting to the Leader through the Head of Council Resources

6.3 Other - None

## 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

<b>AUTHOR'S NAME</b>	Kirstie MacNeill
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	Service Manager – People and Governance
<b>CONTACT INFO</b>	<a href="mailto:kmacneill@eastlothian.gov.uk">kmacneill@eastlothian.gov.uk</a> 01620 827164
<b>DATE</b>	18 October 2019