

RECRUITMENT OF STATUTORY OFFICERS
WDA/61/08

Recommendation

That:

1. Members approve the revised Senior Management Team structure including Statutory Officer functions;
2. Members note the response of constituent District Council Chief Executives regarding the Authority's request for expressions of interest in the role of Clerk; and
3. The cost implications for 2009/2010 identified in 7.2 are built into the proposed budget for that year.

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Report of the Director

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Members of the result of the Authority's request for expressions of interest from the Chief Executives of the constituent Districts to fulfil the post of Clerk to the Authority.
- 1.2 To report on the appointment of the interim Statutory Officers.
- 1.3 To seek approval to a revised senior management structure incorporating the roles of Statutory Officers.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Authority has statutory obligations to appoint a Treasurer, Clerk and Monitoring Officer. In light of the resignation of the incumbent officers, the Authority approved interim arrangements and a process for the recruitment of permanent positions at its meeting on 17th October 2008 (Report WDA/61/08).
- 2.2 The appointments of Acting Monitoring Officer and Clerk were implemented as detailed in that report. The appointment of Acting Treasurer was implemented as detailed in the Executive Decision (ED_04_08) proposed to Members on 17th November 2008.
- 2.3 For Members information, the interim statutory officers are as follows:
 - Business Support Manager – Acting Treasurer
 - Assistant Director Strategy and Resources – Acting Monitoring Officer
 - Corporate Services Manager – Acting Clerk

- 2.4 The Director has sought expressions of interest from the Chief Executives of the Constituent District Councils to fulfil the post of Clerk to the Authority. They have all confirmed that they are unwilling to assume the role.

3. Proposed Senior Management Structure

- 3.1 Following initial discussions with the North West Employers Organisation and given the feedback so far in the process of appointing interim statutory officers, it is clear that the permanent recruitment of suitably qualified and experienced officers on a part time basis, either directly or seconded, will be a challenging recruitment exercise.
- 3.2 Whilst the former statutory officers have indicated that none of the posts have a full time requirement in their opinion, the nature of the statutory responsibilities of each post calls upon their expertise to be available on a full time basis.
- 3.3 In light of the significant and ongoing increase in the Authority's budget, the complexity of contractual relationships and the above issues in relation to recruitment, the Director is proposing an amendment to the management structure to include an additional Assistant Director which would be a full time position, incorporating the role of Treasurer with senior business support responsibilities. A revised organisational structure is attached at Appendix 1. This new post would essentially be the role assumed by the Business Support Manager under the interim arrangements.
- 3.4 This proposal in turn would lead to a review of the existing Business Support Manager role and it is envisaged that this post would be regraded once the permanent appointment of Assistant Director (Finance) has been implemented.
- 3.5 In respect of the post of Clerk, the position has no statutorily defined function and it is therefore at the discretion of the Authority to limit the role to the administrative function defined in existing policy and procedures. Given that there have been no expressions of interest from Chief Executives, the Director is proposing to redefine the role of clerk to this administrative function.
- 3.6 To be able to provide the Authority with an equivalent level of service to that proposed for the new treasury function, the clerk and monitoring

officer roles would also justify a full time presence. To achieve this and to utilise the Authority's existing skills base, it is proposed that these statutory duties be incorporated permanently into the posts that are currently fulfilling the interim roles (Assistant Director Strategy and Resources and Corporate Services Manager). This has the added benefit of saving recruitment costs.

4. Implementation Process

- 4.1 Subject to Members' approval of the proposed structure, the recruitment of the Assistant Director (Finance) would be dealt with by the recruitment panel established in the previous statutory officer report to Members (WDA/61/08).

5. Risk Implications

- 5.1 The risk associated with the failure to appoint a Clerk and Monitoring Officer will be eliminated by the proposals in this report.
- 5.2 The establishment of a full time post of Assistant Director (Finance) will attract a wider range of candidates and therefore will assist in the successful recruitment of a suitably qualified and experienced Treasurer.
- 5.3 The transparency provided by the implementation of the recruitment process and the subsequent clarity of officers roles will enable the Authority to ensure that its statutory duties have been met and in addition, senior officers have no ambiguity as to their contractual employment responsibilities.

6. HR Implications

- 6.1 The appointments detailed in para 3.6 above are subject to agreement and consultation with the officers concerned.
- 6.2 Following the recruitment of the Assistant Director (Finance), the acting postholder would revert back to his role as Business Support Manager. However, this post would be subject to the review detailed in para 3.4 above and it is envisaged that the revised post would be graded below its current level. Under these circumstances, the Authority would apply its Protection of Earnings Policy.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 On the assumption that a new Assistant Director (Finance) commences employment with the Authority 1st April 2008 (this forecasts the maximum cost implication), the financial implications to the Authority will be:

<u>2008/09</u>	£
Costs and Salary Overheads	8,500
Recruitment Costs	20,000

The above expenditure relates to four months increased costs in 2008/09 and can be contained within current budgeting levels.

2009/10

Costs and Salary Overheads	93,000
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The Authority will review the individual grading of the posts affected through the recruitment panel at the time of appointment.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 Members are asked to note the progress made in the implementation of interim arrangements for the appointment of Statutory Officers and to approve the revised management structure.

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