

SENIOR MANAGEMENT APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 14th October, 2025.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor L. Burnett (Chair); Councillors G.D.D. Carroll, E. Goodjohn, Dr. I.J. Johnson and E. Williams.

Also Present: Councillor R.M. Birch (Cabinet Member for Education, Arts and the Welsh Language)

378 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Operational Manager – Democratic Services read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing”.

379 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor B.E. Brooks (Vice-Chair).

380 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September, 2025 be approved as a correct record.

381 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

382 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION DETAILS FOR THE POST OF HEAD OF ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (DLR) –

The Director of Learning and Skills presented the report which set out the recruitment and selection arrangements for the post of Head of Additional Learning Needs, and explained the wider context for the pace of this recruitment exercise, noting that approximately 18 months ago, the Council attempted to recruit to this position using a national advert, and despite receiving a range of applicants, none were taken forward. She noted that this position required a specialist background, particularly given legislative changes in area, alongside

ALN being an area on the Council's Corporate Risk Register, whilst indicating that developing from within the Council's existing staff presented an opportunity to draw on the skills and experiences of Headteachers. Following the unsuccessful National recruitment exercise, all Headteachers were reached out to and offered a two-year secondment to consider applying for the position, and following a rigorous interview process, the current postholder was appointed. She shared that the main catalyst for the pace needed and for this to be an internal recruitment exercise was that the School's governing body would like the current postholder to return to their substantive post as Headteacher.

Councillor Dr. Johnson shared that he understood the reason for the secondment but questioned if this was a fair process if running an internal only process, whilst reflecting that he would remain neutral in assessing future due to the limited relationship with the existing postholder. The Director of Learning and Skills replied that there were excellent leaders in schools, and due to the critical nature of the role and skill sets within existing Headteachers, they likely would have sought an internal recruitment exercise at the end of the two-year secondment.

Councillor Goodjohn reflected that Schools were facing significant pressures currently, and sought to further understand the benefits of recruiting internally versus externally, to which the Director of Learning and Skills responded that the benefit for internal recruitment was that there was clear leadership development in place and including succession planning supported by the Central South Consortium, and that this provided an opportunity to look from within for a key post.

Councillor Carroll noted that there could be a perception publicly that this was a "fait accompli" and there was a need for this to be an open process. He further sought to understand the timescales involved if this was advertised externally, to which the Director of Learning and Skills advised it would likely be an additional three months due to the potential notice period of any successful applicants.

The Leader noted that a quarter of cost pressures in schools were due to Additional Learning Needs, and whilst recognising that the School wanted their substantive Headteacher to return, there was the potential of a three-month hiatus in leading this service area, which could have an impact.

The Chief Executive indicated that, irrespective of the process undertaken, the only certainty was that the current Head of Additional Learning Needs returned back to their original school, and that other applicants may apply. He noted that the internal option gave pace and highlighted the need to move quickly.

Councillor Williams reflected that from his experiences, internal recruitment exercises were open to all employees, so he believed this to be a legitimate process to provide opportunities for progression and succession planning.

Councillor Carroll sought clarity surrounding when the secondment was due to end, and how the School's governing body could be engaged to resolve the challenge, to which the Leader responded that the School's governing body could ask for an individual to return if challenges arose within the school. The Director of

Learning and Skills advised that the current end date would be Monday, 3rd November, 2025. The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development indicated that conversations were ongoing with the School's governing body.

Councillors Carroll and Dr. Johnson both indicated that they did not support the recommendations based on the debate surrounding internal only recruitment exercise.

RESOLVED – T H A T the recruitment and selection arrangements as described for the position in the body of the report be approved for

- a. advertising the positions;
- b. progressing the necessary arrangements for long-listing and any necessary assessment of candidates in advance of shortlisting;
- c. drawing up a final short-list for interviews, the interviews of which would be undertaken by future meetings of this Committee, and to;
- d. agree costings and resource requirements relating to the processes required to pursue the recruitment and selection processes.

Reasons for decision

- (1) To ensure the appointments were progressed in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.
- (2) To allow matters to be progressed in advance of the final stage of recruitment.

383 MATTER WHICH THE CHAIR HAD DECIDED WAS URGENT -

RESOLVED – T H A T the following matter which the Chair had decided was urgent for the reason given beneath the minute heading be considered.

384 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING (CX) – **(Urgent by reason of the Committee being appraised of the situation surrounding recruitment and selection arrangements for the Director of Environment and Housing)**

The Chief Executive provided an update on the recruitment process for the above position, and that following initial assessment, the previous meeting of this Committee (3rd October) was cancelled as there were no suitable candidates to consider bringing forward. He advised that Members would be aware the previous postholder retired last week, and that arrangements were being put in place to support service area whilst there was exploration as to how to progress this moving forward.

Councillor Dr. Johnson sought clarity on the short term arrangements, to which the Chief Executive responded that he would be basing himself in the Alps office on a part-time basis, regularly meeting with individual Heads of Services on a regular basis, and facilitating the existing management team meetings to ensure a continuity in arrangements. He indicated that this would be communicated to all Members shortly, and that the Personal Assistant in the service area would be able to support in signposting Members to the most appropriate officer to deal with any queries.

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the current position in relation to recruitment to the post of Director of Environment and Housing be noted.
- (2) T H A T a further report be brought to this Committee as arrangements were made for progressing the appointment to the post of Director of Environment and Housing.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To ensure that Members were informed as to the current position.
- (2) To ensure that all Council functions were met within this area.