

Meeting of:	Senior Management Appointment Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 02 February 2026
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Recruitment and Selection Arrangements for the Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources
Purpose of Report:	To request the Committee to identify and confirm, following interview, a suitable candidate for appointment to the post of Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources.
Report Owner:	Rob Thomas, Chief Executive
Responsible Officer:	Liz Jones, Director of Learning & Skills
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Officers have been involved in the initial round of interviews and associated recruitment activity
Policy Framework:	The final decision of the Senior Management Appointments Committee will be referred to Full Council for information
Executive Summary: • This report sets out the arrangements for the final interview stage for the above post. • Members are asked to identify and confirm, following interview, a suitable candidate for appointment. • Details of the shortlisted applicants, including application forms, will be provided under Part II of the agenda.	

Recommendations

1. To conduct interviews for the post of Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources and to determine whether a suitable candidate should be appointed.
2. To delegate authority for any residual appointment matters to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Director of Learning and Skills, should a suitable candidate be confirmed by the Committee.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure an appointment to the post is conducted in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
2. To ensure that the Council's strategic and operational responsibilities within this service area continue to be met.

1. Background

- 1.1 Following the appointment of the current postholder to another interim role within the Authority, the Senior Management Appointment Committee met on 09 January 2026 and approved the arrangements to recruit to the position of Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources on an interim basis until 01 August 2027.
- 1.2 The Job Description and Person Specification for the post is included in the Recruitment Pack which is attached to this report as Appendix A.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 In accordance with the prior approval of the Committee the post was advertised on a fixed term or secondment basis externally and internally, from 12 January 2026 until 23 January 2026.
- 2.2 Following an assessment process which included a technical interview and presentation, the Director of Learning and Skills, in consultation with colleagues involved in the assessment, has identified candidates to be invited to the final interview stage with Members.
- 2.3 At the final interview stage, Members of the Committee will interview the shortlisted applicants and determine whether any candidate is suitable for appointment.
- 2.4 A proposed list of interview questions and the presentation topic will be circulated separately for Members' consideration.
- 2.5 Interviews will be conducted under "Part II" provisions of Access to Information legislation and Assessment forms will be provided at the Final Interview for Members to complete as part of the assessment.

- 2.6** Members are asked to delegate residual appointment details, as appropriate, to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Director of Learning and Skills if a suitable applicant is confirmed by Members.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** This recruitment and selection exercise relates to an interim appointment arising from the redeployment of the current postholder to another interim role within the Authority.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** There are no Climate Change and Nature Implications as a direct result of this report and process.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** The funding for the post is already included in the Council's budget given that the post is part of the establishment. As a consequence, no additional funding is required.

Employment

- 5.2** No direct implications other than those specified in the report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3** This recruitment process is compliant with Local Government, Employment and Equalities legislation. The recruitment process has been managed in accordance with the Council's equality proofed recruitment and selection policy and the provisions of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (Wales) Regulations 2014.

6. Background Papers

[Recruitment and Selection details for the posts of Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources, Senior Management Appointments Committee, 09 January 2026](#)



Head of Strategy, Community Learning & Resources

Thank you for your interest in the role of **Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources** at the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

This is a **senior leadership role focused on shaping direction across learning, communities and resources**, at a pivotal moment for learning and public services in the Vale. It offers a rare opportunity to work alongside schools, partners and colleagues to enable improvement, strengthen confidence and build long-term sustainability across the education system.

The role is offered on an **initial 18-month contract**, with a clear focus on transformation, capability-building and enabling lasting change rather than short-term fixes.

Interview dates:

- **First stage interview:** 28th January 2026
- **Final stage interview:** 2nd February 2026

About the Vale of Glamorgan Council

The Vale of Glamorgan is a diverse and distinctive area, with vibrant towns, rural communities and a strong sense of place. We are one of Wales's consistently high-performing local authorities, recognised for our commitment to innovation, collaboration and public service.

Our work is guided by **Vale 2030**, the Council's long-term Strategy. Vale 2030 sets out our shared ambition to build strong communities with a bright future. It provides a clear framework for decision-making, helping us focus on what matters most.

The Learning and Skills Directorate plays a key role in delivering Vale 2030, working closely with schools, communities and partners to support learning across the life course and create the conditions where people and communities can thrive.



Why this role matters

The Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources plays a vital role within the Learning and Skills Directorate, working closely with the Director of Learning and Skills and fellow Heads of Service.

The role brings together three interconnected areas: strategic leadership and integration; community learning and place-based impact; and the effective stewardship of resources to enable confident, informed and sustainable decision-making.

Impact is achieved through professional credibility, trusted relationships and shared ownership, working alongside schools as strategic partners to support improvement through engagement, dialogue and shared problem-solving.

Working with Schools

We are looking for a leader with **demonstrable experience of working closely with schools and partners to support improvement, build confidence and enable sustainable change.**

You will be comfortable operating in environments where progress depends on influence, credibility and trust, and where outcomes are achieved through engagement, challenge and shared ownership rather than instruction.

You will work closely with headteachers, governing bodies and school leaders to:

- Support improvement and transformation through influence rather than instruction
- Strengthen confidence and capability in strategic and financial decision-making
- Enable more informed conversations about priorities, choices and trade-offs
- Foster shared ownership of long-term sustainability and educational ambition

Key Areas of Focus

A core focus of this role over the 18 months is strengthening **financial capability, confidence and commitment** across the school system.

You will work directly with schools to support improvement in financial position and sustainability, including addressing underlying pressures in a constructive, partnership-based way. This will be achieved by improving financial understanding, supporting more informed decision-making and enabling prudent, sustainable approaches to the use of resources.

This includes helping to align educational ambition with long-term affordability and value, while respecting professional autonomy and local context.



- Enabling confident and informed use of resources across services and schools
- Supporting approaches that strengthen long-term affordability, resilience and value
- Aligning resources to priorities while respecting autonomy and professionalism
- Maximising opportunities for funding, collaboration and innovation.

Our values in action

Open



- You will foster honest, transparent conversations, using evidence and insight to support shared understanding.
- You will engage openly with schools, colleagues, members and partners, listening carefully and responding thoughtfully.

Together



- You will work collaboratively across organisational and professional boundaries, building strong partnerships based on trust and respect.
- You will enable co-production and shared ownership rather than directive solutions.

Proud



- You will act as a credible ambassador for the Vale of Glamorgan Council.
- You will demonstrate stewardship of public resources and pride in supporting learning and opportunity for our communities.

Ambitious



- You will look beyond immediate pressures to build sustainable approaches for the future.
- You will champion learning, innovation and continuous improvement, enabling others to grow in confidence and capability.

What We're Looking For

We are seeking a senior leader who brings:

- Significant senior leadership experience in complex organisations.
- Proven ability to lead improvement and transformation through influence rather than direct control.
- Strong understanding of financial management and sustainability, with experience improving financial position through capability-building and better decision-making.
- Credible experience working with schools and other autonomous partners to build financial confidence, prudence and informed choices.
- Excellent communication, relationship-building and negotiation skills, with sound judgement and resilience in ambiguous environments.



Why Join Us?

At the Vale of Glamorgan Council, you will:

- Work at a senior level on issues that matter to communities and future generations
- Influence learning, wellbeing and opportunity across a diverse and vibrant area
- Collaborate with committed professionals across schools, services and partners
- Be trusted to shape approach, not simply deliver a prescribed model
- Leave a meaningful legacy by strengthening confidence, capability and sustainability

Alongside the impact and purpose of the role, we offer a supportive and progressive working environment that recognises the needs of senior leaders:

- Flexible working arrangements and supportive people policies that enable balance and sustainability at senior level.
- A culture that values learning, wellbeing and continuous personal and professional growth.
- A strong local government pension scheme and a generous annual leave entitlement.
- Access to staff networks and communities that support inclusion, connection and belonging.
- A clear commitment to Vale 2030, with a workplace rooted in purpose, fairness and service to our communities

Interested?

If this role resonates with you and you would like to contribute your leadership to this important work, we would welcome your application.

For an informal conversation about the role, please contact:

Liz Jones, Director of Learning and Skills elizjones@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Closing date for applications: 23rd January 2026



Head of Strategy, Community Learning & Resources

■ Job Title	▶ Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources
■ Post Number	▶ PH-AA-001
■ Directorate	▶ Learning and Skills
■ Location	▶ Civic Offices, Barry & Remote Working
■ Grade	▶ Head of Service
■ Responsible to	▶ Director of Learning and Skills
■ Responsible for	▶ Strategic and enabling leadership across strategy, community learning and resource functions.
	▶ Working collaboratively with schools, partners and colleagues across the Council to support improvement, sustainability and long-term impact.



Role Purpose

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is committed to providing high-quality, inclusive and sustainable learning opportunities for our communities. Guided by our values of **Open, Together, Ambitious and Proud**, we work with schools, partners and communities to ensure learning, wellbeing and opportunity remain strong, resilient and responsive to change.

The Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources is a senior leadership role at a time of significant opportunity and challenge. The role focuses on **integration, influence and enablement**, bringing together strategic direction, community learning and effective stewardship of resources to support long-term sustainability and positive outcomes.

Working closely with the Director of Learning and Skills, fellow Heads of Service, schools and partners, you will help shape direction, build confidence and capability, and enable transformation across the system. Much of the impact of this role is achieved through professional credibility, trusted relationships and shared ownership, working alongside schools as strategic partners to support improvement through engagement, dialogue and shared problem-solving.

This role is offered on an **initial 18-month basis**, with a clear focus on enabling transformation, strengthening strategic and financial capability, and supporting schools and services to operate with confidence, insight and resilience for the future.



Your key accountabilities

As the Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources, you will:

Strategic Leadership and Integration

- Provide senior leadership that brings coherence across strategy, community learning and the effective use of resources.
- Work closely with the Director of Learning and Skills to shape and deliver directorate priorities aligned to the Corporate Plan and Vale 2030.
- Anticipate emerging challenges and opportunities, supporting timely and proportionate responses.
- Contribute to the Council's wider strategic leadership as a member of the Directorate Management Team.

Working with Schools to Enable Improvement and Sustainability

- Work in close partnership with schools, headteachers and governing bodies to support improvement and transformation through influence, engagement and negotiation.
- Enable schools to strengthen confidence and capability in strategic and financial planning, supporting more informed and sustainable decision-making.
- Foster a culture of shared ownership, openness and professional trust when addressing complex and sensitive issues.
- Support schools to connect educational ambition with long-term affordability and value, respecting autonomy while promoting collective responsibility.

Community Learning and Place-Based Leadership

- Provide leadership that strengthens the contribution of community learning to wellbeing, inclusion and opportunity across the Vale.
- Support the development of responsive, accessible community learning provision aligned to local need and wider strategic priorities.
- Work with partners and communities to maximise the impact of learning spaces, services and assets.

Resources, Value and Stewardship

- Provide strategic oversight of resources, ensuring they are aligned to priorities and used effectively to support long-term sustainability.
- Enable improved financial awareness, insight and confidence across services and schools.
- Support the development of approaches that strengthen value, affordability and resilience over time.



- Maximise opportunities for external funding and partnership working in line with Council policy.

Leadership, Culture and Performance

- Create clarity of purpose and direction, supporting leaders and teams to operate with confidence and accountability.
- Foster a strong culture of performance, learning and continuous improvement.
- Act as a role model for the Council's values and leadership behaviours, supporting their embedding across the Directorate.
- Support the development of talent, capability and leadership capacity across services.

Stakeholder and Member Engagement

- Build and maintain effective relationships with elected members, senior leaders, schools, partners and external organisations.
- Support Cabinet Members, Scrutiny Members and other elected members in their roles.
- Represent the Council professionally in external forums and partnerships.

Corporate responsibilities

- Drive service efficiency and effectiveness by identifying opportunities to improve outcomes through collaboration, innovation and partnership working.
- Lead and contribute to the development and implementation of policies, procedures and ways of working that support the Council's objectives.
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring equality of opportunity and Welsh language duties are embedded across the workforce and service delivery.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, Council policies and procedures, including employee management, health and safety, safeguarding, information governance, equalities, environmental responsibilities, and Financial and Contract Procedure Rules.
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the role, as required to meet changing organisational needs, without altering the overall purpose or level of responsibility of the post.

Our Values

The postholder will demonstrate the Council's values in all aspects of their work:

Open



Open to different ideas and being accountable for the decisions we take

What it means to this role:

- Creating the conditions for honest, constructive conversations about priorities, choices and impact.



- Using data, insight and professional judgement to support transparency and shared understanding.
- Engaging openly with schools, partners, elected members and colleagues, listening carefully and responding thoughtfully.
- Demonstrating political awareness and accountability in complex and sensitive environments.

Together



Working together as a team that engages with our customers and partners, respects diversity and is committed to quality services.

What it means to this role:

- Working alongside schools as trusted partners, supporting improvement through engagement, dialogue and shared problem-solving.
- Bringing people together across organisational and professional boundaries to align effort and purpose.
- Building strong relationships with headteachers, governing bodies, partners and colleagues to support collective ownership of outcomes.
- Enabling collaboration and co-production rather than directive solutions.

Proud



Proud to serve our communities and be part of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

What it means to this role:

- Acting as a credible ambassador for the Council and the Learning and Skills Directorate.
- Demonstrating stewardship of public resources and pride in supporting learning and opportunity for all.
- Role-modelling professionalism, integrity and respect for the expertise of others.
- Celebrating progress, learning and shared achievement across the system.

Ambitious



Forward thinking, embracing new ways of working and investing in our future

What it means to this role:

- Providing leadership that looks beyond immediate pressures to build sustainable approaches for the long term.
- Supporting innovation and continuous improvement across strategy, community learning and resource use.
- Enabling schools and services to develop the confidence, skills and insight needed to make informed, balanced decisions.
- Championing learning, curiosity and evidence-led thinking across the system.

Head of Strategy, Community Learning & Resources

Person Specification



1

Experience



- Essential
 - Significant senior leadership experience in a complex organisation.
 - Experience of leading improvement, change or transformation through influence rather than direct control.
 - Significant experience of working collaboratively with schools, education services and community-based learning systems.
 - Experience of managing or influencing the effective use of resources and budgets.
- ▶ Desirable
 - ▶ Experience of place-based or community-focused leadership.
- Ascertained by
 - CV and Cover Letter
 - Interview / Assessment

2

Knowledge



- Essential
 - Strong understanding of strategic leadership, organisational change and system working.
 - Understanding of public sector accountability and governance.
 - Knowledge of education, community learning or local government contexts.
- ▶ Desirable
 - ▶
- Ascertained by
 - CV and Cover Letter
 - Interview / Assessment Day

3

Skills and aptitudes



- Essential
 - Ability to influence, negotiate and build trust in complex, politically sensitive environments.
 - Strategic thinking skills, with the ability to connect long-term ambition to practical delivery.
 - Highly effective communication skills, able to engage credibly with diverse audiences.
 - Strong relationship-building capability, grounded in respect and professional credibility.



- Ability to support others to develop confidence, capability and insight.

► Desirable

- Ascertained by
- CV and Cover Letter
- Interview / Assessment Day

4 Qualifications and training



- Essential
- Degree-level qualification or equivalent experience.

► Desirable

► Leadership or management qualification.

- Ascertained by
- CV and Cover Letter
- Interview / Assessment Day

5 Attitude and motivation



- Essential
- Highly motivated senior leader with a strong sense of public service.
- Adaptable and resilient, able to work effectively in ambiguity and change.
- Committed to collaborative, values-led leadership.
- Passionate about enabling others to succeed and creating sustainable impact.

► Desirable

- Ascertained by
- CV and Cover Letter
- Interview / Assessment Day

6 Other (please specify)



- Essential
- Personal and professional credibility.
- Capacity to work flexibly, including attendance at evening meetings as required.
- Ability to travel within the Vale, as necessary.
- Desirable
- Ability to speak or willingness to learn Welsh.
- Ascertained by
- CV and Cover Letter
- Interview / Assessment Day