

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Council

Date of meeting: 14th December 2023

Title: Notification of appointment of Interim Corporate Lead Officer- Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services for up to a 6 month period

Purpose of the report: To notify Council of the appointment of an Interim Corporate Lead Officer - Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services for up to a 6 month period

For: Information

Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:
Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader of the Council

Background

Following the departure of Mr Ricky Cooper, the post of Corporate Lead Officer – Porth Cynnal (and Statutory Director of Social Services) has recently become vacant. This is a statutory and critical role for the Council.

There are currently well documented recruitment challenges in the social care sector across the UK and at all levels. Following its implementation at the beginning of 2022, the Through Age and Wellbeing programme continues to develop and the need for an experienced leader to be able to immediately continue this progress is seen a critical. The post of Corporate Lead Officer – Porth Cynnal also holds the responsibility of being the Council's Statutory Director of Social Services, a role required under the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 tasked with providing strategic leadership to effectively deliver care and support services.

Taking these issues into consideration a proposal to appoint an interim Corporate Lead Officer – Porth Cynnal for up to a 6 month period, via a recruitment agency was accepted by the Appointments Panel, made up of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bryan Davies along with both Opposition Group Leaders, Councillors Elizabeth Evans and Gareth Lloyd.

The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (Wales) Regulations (2006) (as amended) Schedule 1, as contained within Document H, Officer Employment Procedure Rules, of the Council's Constitution (see Appendix A), allows for the appointment of a chief officer under an interim arrangement, provided that it lasts for a period of no longer than 12 months.

Appointment of Interim Corporate Lead Officer: Porth Cynnal (and Statutory Director of Social Services)

On Thursday, 16th November 2023, an Appointments Panel made up of Councillor Bryan Davies, Councillor Elizabeth Evans and Councillor Gareth Lloyd as Group

Leaders, considered the re-engagement of Ms Audrey Somerton-Edwards, a qualified social worker with significant senior management experience.

After consideration it was resolved to engage with Ms Somerton-Edwards' services for up to a period of up to 6 months as Interim Corporate Lead Officer – Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services on an agency basis. The engagement in this role will start on 13th November 2023.

Recruitment to permanent role of Corporate Lead Officer - Porth Cynnal (and Statutory Director of Social Services)

The interim appointment will allow for a comprehensive recruitment campaign to be undertaken for the permanent appointment of a Corporate Lead Officer - Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services.

The appointment process will be as prescribed in Part 3.3 (Table 3) in the Constitution which requires that a Shortlisting Committee be established of 7 Elected Members. The Committee is required to produce a shortlist of qualified applicants for the role, to interview the applicants if needs be before recommending their appointment to Council for approval.

The recruitment campaign has already commenced and the Shortlisting Committee will be convened shortly.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.

No – not a policy or service change.

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term:	N/A
Collaboration:	N/A
Involvement:	N/A
Prevention:	N/A
Integration:	N/A

Recommendation(s):

To note the engagement of Ms Audrey Somerton-Edwards services as Interim Corporate Lead Officer - Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services on an agency basis for up to a 6 month period from 13th November 2023.

Reasons for decision:

To notify Council of the appointment of an Interim Corporate Lead Officer- Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services.

Overview and Scrutiny:

N/A

Policy Framework:

Council's Constitution.

Corporate Well-being Objectives:

To support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities:

- Boosting the Economy
- Investing in People's Futures
- Enabling Individual and Family Resilience
- Promoting Environmental and Community Resilience

Finance and Procurement implications:

Ms Somerton-Edwards has been engaged on an agency basis, the rate needs to be classed as commercially sensitive. Consequently, the relevant information is contained in an exempt item (Appendix B - EXEMPT)

Legal Implications:

None.

Staffing implications:

Appointment of an Interim Corporate Lead Officer - Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services for up to a period of up to 6 months.

Property / asset implications:

None.

Risk(s):

- Failure to appoint to a Statutory Director of Social Services will result in the Council not complying with Section 144 of the Social Service and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, which will alert Care Inspectorate Wales, the social care sector Regulator.
- Failure to appoint an experienced social care senior manager will negatively impact the development of the Through age and Well-being programme at a critical time

Statutory Powers:

- Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended) Schedule 1, Part 1;
- Section 144 of the Social Service and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Background Papers:

None.

Appendices:

- a) Officer Employment Procedure Rules in Document H;
- b) Exempt Item.

Reporting Officer:

Eifion Evans, Chief Executive

Date:

16th November 2023