
Extraordinary Council Meeting on 6 November 2025

Report of the Chief Officer HR and Support Services For the Leader of the Council

Appointment of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)

Summary

1. The purpose of the report is to invite Full Council to approve the recommendation of the Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee's Appointments Panel to appoint Richard Webb to the role of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service).
2. An appointment panel was convened in accordance with paragraph 3.5 of Article 11 of the Constitution. The panel was delegated powers to conduct a recruitment process to appoint a Chief Executive including selecting and making a recommendation of a successful candidate to Full Council for approval.
3. Subject to approval, arrangements will be made to offer a contract of employment subject to appropriate recruitment checks to Richard and he will commence in role on the retirement and departure of Ian Floyd – Chief Operating Officer in April 2026. Ian Floyd will remain in post until his retirement.

Recommendations

4. Council is recommended to:
 - a. Note the recruitment process which has been followed for the appointment of the Council's Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
 - b. Approve the recommendation of the Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee's appointment panel to appoint Richard Webb to the post of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service),
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subject to satisfactory completion of appropriate recruitment checks.

Reasons: The recommendations are supported to enable the Council to appoint a Chief Executive to discharge the duties and functions assigned to the role and for the Council to remain compliant by employing a Head of Paid Service at all times.

The mechanism to do so is pursuant to the Constitution and Officer Employment Procedure Rules. It was essential for the Council to undertake a robust and thorough recruitment and selection process upon announcement of the Chief Operating Officer's retirement ahead of Easter 2026. The Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee's appointment panel, the Chief Officer HR and Support Services and Penna (the Council's appointed recruitment consultants) have worked closely to ensure that the Council has been able to attract and appoint exceptional talent to the role.

Background

5. Following the announcement of the Chief Operating Officer's proposed retirement at Easter 2026, a report was submitted to the Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee on 14 July 2025 to make arrangements to commence a recruitment exercise.
 6. The early notification allowed for a dedicated and specialist recruitment campaign to be developed to attract quality candidates and for a robust recruitment process to be undertaken. The next few months, subject to approval, allows for the successful candidate to make appropriate notice arrangements with their current employer and undertake an onboarding and smooth leadership transition process to City of York Council in April 2026.
 7. A recruitment campaign was launched at the end of July 2025 and closed on 5 September. The campaign attracted 39 applications. Applications were longlisted to 9 candidates. These 9 candidates participated in technical interviews to assess suitability. Five of these candidates were successful to be invited to stakeholder panel interviews.
 8. 37 stakeholders sitting across seven panels were involved in testing the candidates and providing valuable feedback to the appointment
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panel. Panels included Citizens, Partners, Members, Corporate Leadership Group, Staff Network, Trade Unions and Young People.

9. The outcome of the stakeholder panels saw four candidates proceed to leadership testing against the recognised LGA Chief Executives' Behavioural Framework and a final interview on 24 October, 2025.

The appointment panel consisted of:

- a. Councillor Douglas – Leader of the Council (Chair)
 - b. Councillor Kilbane – Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economy and Culture
 - c. Councillor Crawshaw – Chair, Planning Committee
 - d. Councillor Steward – Leader of the Conservative Group
 - e. Councillor Ayre – Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group
 - f. Debbie Mitchell – Director of Finance (Advisory Officer capacity)
 - g. Helen Whiting – Chief Officer HR & Support Services (Advisory Officer capacity)
10. Following the interview process, members of the Executive were presented with the name of the candidate that the Appointment panel wished to recommend the offer of appointment to, as well as an opportunity to raise an objection. Any objection must be well founded, for example an undeclared relationship with a member of the Council or a non-declaration of an unspent conviction which impacts on the role. There were no objections submitted.
 11. The same principle now applies to Full Council, and all members are requested to vote for approval to appoint Richard Webb as City of York Council's Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) following the retirement of the Chief Operating Officer in April 2026.
 12. The Chief Executive salary range is from £159,643 to £177,821, Richard will be offered a salary of £177,821 on appointment. Returning Officer fees are also applicable on a separate basis. The role has a standby payment attached to it which equates to £20.55 per month for emergency standby rota. The role will have access to the standard set of Chief Executive Terms and Conditions. There are no enhancements, bonuses or additional discretions attached to the role
 13. A brief summary of Richard's biography and employment history is included in **Annex A**.
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Other options for Full Council

14. It is a requirement to ensure that the Council always employs a Head of Paid Service. There is an option for Full Council to not approve the recommended candidate, however the reasons must be well founded.
15. Should the recommended candidate not be voted favourably, options will be considered in consultation with the Chief Officer HR and Support Services. Options will initially involve reviewing the objections and the reason(s) for the objections, and consideration would be given to appropriate alternative proposals (reassessment of suitable other candidates, readvertisement, interim arrangements). Options would then be presented to Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee, then back again to Full Council for approval.

Consultation

The proposals contained in this report have been agreed by the Leader. A range of internal and external stakeholders and partners have contributed to the decision-making process as set out in **paragraph 8** of this report.

Council Plan

16. The appointment of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) will oversee and help the delivery of the Council Plan.

Implications

17. **Financial** – The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) is an established post and is within the budget provision for 2025/26, therefore, no additional costs will be incurred in making this appointment.
 18. **Legal** – A decision to appoint the Chief Executive, a post that discharges the statutory function of Head of Paid Service and a number of other proper officer functions, is one that must be made by Full Council. The approach within this report has sought to ensure that the Council continues to meet its statutory requirements as set out in the Constitution.
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19. **Human resources** – There are no HR issues as a robust and fair recruitment and selection process has been followed in accordance with Council policy and the Council constitution. There will be appropriate on-boarding and induction arrangements in place to ensure a smooth transition of changing corporate leadership.
20. There are no specific **Equalities, Crime and Disorder, Information Technology, Property or other issues or implications**

Risks

21. There are no identified known risks with the proposals set out in this report.

Contact Details:

**Author and Chief Officer
responsible for the
report:**

**Helen Whiting, Chief Officer –
HR and Support Services**

**Report
Approved**

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Date 28 October
2025

Specialist Implications Officers

Bryn Roberts, Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer
Debbie Mitchell, Director of Finance

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All ☒ **Yes**

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee Report – Recruitment of Head of Paid Services -14th July 2025.

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s184297/SMUC%20Recruitment%20of%20Head%20of%20Paid%20Services%20140725.pdf>

Annex 1:

Biography and employment history of Richard Webb
