

WMCA Board

Date	28 October 2022
Report title	Confirmation of Director of Law & Governance Appointment
Accountable WMCA Director	Linda Horne, Finance Director and Authority Treasurer, West Midlands Combined Authority email: linda.horne@wmca.org.uk
Accountable Employee	Laurence Adams, Head of HR email: laurence.adams@wmca.org.uk
Report has been considered by	Employment Committee - 1 September 2022

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Endorse the appointment of Helen Edwards as Director of Law and Governance and statutory Monitoring Officer for the West Midland Combined Authority ('WMCA')
- (2) Note that the appointment will take effect upon her taking up duties in early January 2023.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to endorse the appointment of the Director of Law and Governance and to formally confirm that she will act as the Combined Authority's Monitoring Officer upon taking up appointment.

2. Background

- 2.1 The post of Director of Law and Governance is a key role in the organisation. It also acts as the WMCA's statutory Monitoring Officer. It is crucial that the Authority has access to professional and timely legal and governance advice on a regular basis. Since the departure of the previous permanent Director, Tim Martin, the post has been occupied by Satish Mistry on an interim basis.
- 2.2 In the latter part of 2021 a recruitment process was carried out for the permanent appointment of a Director of Law & Governance. An Executive Search Agency was engaged, and a number of candidates were considered as part of the longlist process. However, after further internal consultation with the Mayor and Chief Executive, a decision was taken not to continue with the recruitment process due to the calibre of the individuals taking into account the significant responsibilities the Authority expects this person to be responsible for. In addition, at that time it was felt that there were some major issues including the Governance Review and significant legal service issues which needed attention. Accordingly, it was decided to extend the current interim contract with a view to revisiting the permanent recruitment process in Summer 2022. This was reported to Employment Committee in December 2021.
- 2.3 A further exercise was undertaken through the appointment of Gatenby Sanderson, an Executive Search agency, in Summer 2022. Their purpose was to carry out the search and initial sift for candidates for the position. A longlisting panel comprising of Linda Horne, Executive Director of Finance, Laurence Adams, Head of HR, and Satish Mistry, Interim Director of Law and Governance, interviewed a number of candidates and were able to recommend three individuals to proceed to the formal Employment Committee supported by a Stakeholder Panel.
- 2.4 The candidates were interviewed by the Employment Committee. The Committee was chaired by Cllr Bob Sleight, Deputy Mayor, together with Cllrs Brookfield, Cotton, McCarthy and Clark. The interviews were held on 1st September 2022 and the decision by the Committee was that Helen Edwards was the best candidate for the position and should be recommended for appointment to the permanent role of Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer. Helen is the current Director and Monitoring Officer at Norfolk County Council.
- 2.5 As this is one of the three statutory officers of the Authority, it is the responsibility of the Board to approve this appointment.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 This role is included within the Authority's approved budget for Law and Governance.
- 3.2 The costs of Gatenby Sanderson are also contained within the Directorate's approved budget.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The recommendations of this report are in line with the Authority's Constitution and Pay Policy.

5. Equalities Implications

5.1 Recruitment processes for the appointment complies with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies, Recruitment and Selection policies and the Equality Act 2010.

6. Inclusive Growth Implications

6.1 None to note.

7. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

7.1 None to note.

8. Other Implications

8.1 None to note.

9. Schedule of Background Papers

9.1 None.