

Meeting of:	Senior Management Appointment Committee
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, 24 April 2024
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Recruitment and Selection Arrangements for the Director of Learning and Skills
Purpose of Report:	To ask the Committee to identify and confirm (following interview) a suitable candidate for appointment for the post of Director of Learning and Skills
Report Owner:	Rob Thomas, Chief Executive
Responsible Officer:	Rob Thomas, Chief Executive
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
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report sets out the final interview schedule for the above position. • Members are asked to identify and confirm (following interview) a suitable candidate for appointment. • Details of the shortlisted applicants at the Final Interview Stage including applications from shortlisted candidates, will be shared under Part II. 	

Recommendations

1. To conduct interviews in relation to the post of Director of Learning and Skills and to make a final determination to appoint a suitable candidate.
2. To delegate residual appointment details, as appropriate, to the Chief Executive, if a suitable applicant is confirmed by Elected Members of 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 all Council functions are met within this area.

1. Background

- 1.1 Following the retirement of the current Director, the Senior Management Appointment Committee met on 27 February 2024 and approved the arrangements to recruit to the position of Director of Learning and Skills.
- 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 externally during March 2024.
- 2.2 Following an assessment process which included psychometric testing, a technical interview and presentation and a further presentation to and discussion with the Head Teacher Steering Group , the Chief Executive, in consultation with colleagues also involved in that assessment, has identified candidates that will be invited to the final interview stage with members.
- 2.3 At the final interview stage, it is suggested that Members of this Committee interview the shortlisted applicants and that Members then determine if any candidate is suitable for appointment to the post.
- 2.4 A list of the suggested questions and presentation topic will be circulated for consideration and determination by Members.
- 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 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 will be for a permanent appointment following the retirement of the current postholder. The post will require partnership working and collaboration with a number of stakeholders and partners.

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

None applicable save for the Job description and person specification which formed part of the recruitment pack, attached at Appendix A.

Director of Learning and Skills – Role Profile

Job Title	Director of Learning and Skills
Post Reference	Y-LS-AA002
Grade	Director
Directorate	Learning and Skills
Location	Civic Offices & Remote Working
Responsible to:	Chief Executive
Responsible for:	Standards and Provision Additional Learning Needs and Wellbeing Strategy and Community Learning

Role Overview:

We are seeking a visionary leader to take on the role of Director of Learning and Skills, shaping the future of education and skills development in our vibrant community, to ensure that every child has the best start. This is an opportunity to make a lasting impact, drive innovation, and inspire positive change in the lives of every child and learner in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Director of Learning and Skills is a pivotal leadership role within our Council, responsible for shaping the educational landscape and driving transformational change. This position combines statutory responsibilities under the Education Act 1996, with strategic leadership to propel the Vale toward excellence. As a key member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), you will champion our core values of Openness, Togetherness, Pride, and Ambition in all aspects of your work.

Our Values:		
	Behaviour	What it means to us:
Ambitious	Forward thinking, embracing new ways of working and investing in our future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation: The Director’s strategic leadership drives ambitious innovation, embracing transformative practices. • Continuous Improvement: Ambition is reflected in the pursuit of continuous improvement, both for educators and learners. • Visionary Leadership: By shaping the future of education, the Director embodies ambition.
Open	Open to different ideas and being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency: The Director ensures transparency in the decision-making processes, engaging with stakeholders openly.

	accountable for the decisions we take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion: By championing diversity and equity, the Director creates an open and inclusive environment for all. • Communication: Regular communication with staff, schools, and the community fosters openness and trust.
Together	Working together as a team that engages with our customers and partners, respects diversity and is committed to quality services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships: The Director collaborates with both internal and external stakeholders and partners to create seamless educational pathways. • Engagement: Engaging with elected members, and senior officers across the Council and Schools, ensures collective decision-making and shared vision. • Community Involvement: By involving the wider community, the Director strengthens collaboration.
Proud	Proud to serve our communities and to be part of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Excellence: The Director takes pride in promoting educational excellence, ensuring high standards across all settings. • Student Achievement: Celebrating student achievements and well-being reflects pride in their progress. • Advocacy: Advocating for education at regional and national levels demonstrates pride in our educational system.

Job Description:

As the Director of Learning and Skills, you will:

Statutory Obligations:

- Fulfil the requirements of the role in compliance with statutory requirements and regulations as defined by the Education Act 1996. Ensure compliance with national and local education policies, regulations, and guidelines.
- Provide strategic direction and guidance on education matters, advocating for excellence, equity, and inclusivity across all educational settings within the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Provide expert advice and guidance on education and learning matters to the senior leadership team and elected members, ensuring they are informed and engaged with transformation activities.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with Elected Members, school leaders, Governing Bodies, Inspectors and parent associations to drive positive outcomes for learners.

Strategic Direction:

- Collaborate with Chief Executive, Elected Members and Senior Leaders across the Council to integrate education and learning initiatives into broader strategic plans.

- Lead the ongoing development and implementation of a forward-thinking education and skills strategy that contributes to the transformation programme and aligns with the Council's Corporate Plan and Annual Delivery Plans
- Lead the transformation of educational services, fostering innovation, and driving continuous improvement to meet the evolving needs of our community.
- Champion a learning culture across the organisation, ensuring that learning and education services are designed and delivered to meet the needs and expectations of our diverse communities, and align with our core values of being open, together, proud, and ambitious.

Leadership:

- Lead teams and foster a learner-focused, values-driven culture.
- Create and communicate clarity of direction and purpose for staff at all levels in the context of the strategic aims and ambitions of the Council.
- Lead, direct and inspire people within the Learning and Skills Directorate and across the Council to deliver great results. Ensure processes are in place for identifying and developing talent at all levels.
- Look for opportunities within the directorate to innovate and transform the functions to deliver continuous improvement and evolve the operation to meet the changing opportunities and challenges faced by the Council.
- Through own behaviours, be a role model for the leadership behavioural competencies; promoting and supporting the embedding of the Council's values and behavioural competencies throughout all levels of the organisation to build the organisation's culture.
- Work with colleagues to establish and embed an organisation culture that supports and promotes the right behaviours and performance to ensure the delivery of outcomes that meet the Corporate Plan and strategic objectives of the Council.

Operational Excellence:

- Oversee the effective management of educational resources, including budgets, staffing, and facilities, allocating resources to maximise impact and enhance the provision.
- Champion diversity, equity, and inclusion within educational settings, promoting access and opportunities for all learners.
- Monitor educational standards, performance, and outcomes, using evidence-based practices, fostering evidence-based improvement plans.

General Duties:

- Explore opportunities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services through collaboration and partnership working.
- Facilitate and participate in the introduction of policies, procedures, and practice to support the achievement of the objectives of the Council.
- Ensure that the principles of equality of opportunity are integrated and actively pursued both within the Directorate and in all areas of service provision.
- Ensure continuing compliance with Council policy, procedure and legislation including those related to the management of employees, health and safety, customer relations, safeguarding,

information, equalities, the environment, and those specifically set out in Financial and Contract Procedure Rules.

In addition to the duties set out above, the postholder will be required to undertake such additional duties which may result from changing circumstances, but which may not of necessity change the general character or level of responsibility accorded to the post.

Person Specification

		Essential	Desirable	Ascertained by
1.	Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in providing strategic direction and guidance to improve the lives of children and young people. • Experience in driving forward a people focused, values-driven culture across an organisation. • Significant experience of leading mixed discipline teams, demonstrating ability to build a learner focused culture of improvement, effectiveness, and innovation. • Experience of building high performing teams and providing inspirational leadership to the wider organisation that drive a high-performance culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government and/or Public Sector experience. • Experience in liaising with government bodies, educational institutions, and community stakeholders. • Experience of working with Elected Members and of dealing with politically sensitive issues. • Track record of driving transformational change and innovation in an educational or children’s context. 	<p>Application Form</p> <p>Interview</p>

		Essential	Desirable	Ascertained by
2.	Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth understanding of the Education Act 1996 and its implications for the role of Director of Learning and Skills, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and regulations. • Familiarity and experience of working with national and local education policies, regulations and guidelines, guiding the strategic direction of education within the Vale of Glamorgan. • Awareness of the challenges and opportunities present in the education sector, with the ability to leverage this knowledge to improve educational outcomes. • Proficiency in local government financial management, including budgeting, resource allocation, and adherence to compliance standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the specific educational environment and community needs in the Vale of Glamorgan. • Familiarity with performance management systems and methodologies. • A grasp of Estyn inspections' function in evaluating the quality and standards of education in schools, ensuring accountability and the ongoing search for improvement. 	<p>Application Form</p> <p>Interview</p>

		Essential	Desirable	Ascertained by
3.	Skills and aptitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to be a role model for the leadership behavioural competencies and promote the Council’s values and behavioural competencies throughout all levels of the organisation. • A strategic thinker, with the ability to develop and implement strategies that support the achievement of organisational objectives. • Excellent leadership skills, able to provide clarity to your team on the vision and purpose of their work. • Strong track record of building and nurturing productive working relationships, able to advocate for educational excellence, equity, and inclusivity. • Highly effective communication skills, able to influence others with impact and professional credibility, with the ability to communicate to a diverse community. • Dedicated to professional development and keeping abreast of relevant regulation and education trends. • Ability to manage resources effectively, including budgets, staffing, and facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to integrate education and learning initiatives into broader strategic plans. • Skills in fostering a learning culture across an organisation. 	<p>Application Form</p> <p>Interview</p>
4.	Qualifications and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant L7/Degree Qualification or equivalent experience 		Application Form

		Essential	Desirable	Ascertained by
5.	Attitude and motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly motivated senior leader, able to act as a role model to team members and peers. • Adaptable and flexible to meet a variety of challenges. • An inspiring leader, able to engage team members to deliver exception performance in a challenging environment. • Innovative, change champion, who is happy to challenge the status quo to deliver on strategic objectives and solve problems. • A passionate role model of the values of the Council. 		Interview
6.	Other (please specify)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and professional credibility • Drive, energy, and enthusiasm to sustain an extensive agenda. • Capacity to work outside of normal office hours and attend evening meetings as and when required. • Ability to drive/travel throughout the Vale or between locations as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to speak or learn Welsh 	Application Form Interview