

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Council	
MEETING DATE:	17 July 2025	
TITLE:	Flexible retirement of Chief Executive	
WARD:	All	
A PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 At its meeting on 7th July 2025, the Restructuring Implementation Committee considered the flexible retirement application from the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service). The Restructuring Implementation Committee recommends to Council to approve the flexible retirement decision.

2 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Restructuring Implementation Committee that the Council approves the following:

- 2.1 The flexible retirement of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) from 1 October 2025 for a period of four months in the first instance whilst a new Chief Executive is recruited.
- 2.2 Delegate to the Director of People & Change, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the power to extend the flexible retirement arrangement by mutual agreement for up to one further month if required to ensure a smooth transition.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 Within the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations, there is discretion (in specific regulations) for the Scheme Employer to make decisions concerning the pension benefit entitlements of its current or past scheme members and this is covered by "Policy the Employer Discretions".
- 3.2 Flexible Retirement is a discretion covered by Regulation 30 (6) and outlined in the policy. This regulation allows Bath & North East Somerset Council to agree to release all or some pension benefits for a LGPS member aged 55 or over,

who with the Council's consent reduces their hours of work or their pay grade i.e. flexible retirement.

- 3.3 Will Godfrey was appointed by the Council as Chief Executive, Head of Paid Service and Returning Officer on a permanent basis at its meeting on 5th September 2019. He commenced employment on 7th October 2019.
- 3.4 He is over 55 and a member of the Avon Pension Fund (part of the Local Government Pension Scheme). He has applied to take flexible retirement from 1 October 2025, working 0.6 FTE.
- 3.5 It is recommended that a short period of flexible retirement is agreed from 1 October 2025 to 31 January 2026. This is to cover the period whilst a new Chief Executive is recruited, with recruitment commencing in September 2025.
- 3.6 During the flexible retirement period, he will work the 0.6 FTE flexibly to ensure that key strategic leadership activities and duties are delivered. There will be no significant detriment to service delivery. He will continue as Head of Paid Service and Returning Officer, leading the Executive Leadership Team and Corporate Management Team, working closely with cabinet and Council to deliver the Council's strategy and key priorities.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires all local authorities to appoint a Head of Paid Service.
- 4.2 Flexible Retirement is a discretion covered by Regulation 30 (6) in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations. The Council has adopted a discretionary policy on flexible retirement (Appendix 2) and the recommendation in this report is compliant with the policy in proposing that this discretion be exercised.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 There are no additional pension or salary costs associated with this application.
- 5.2 The cost of this employment at 0.6 FTE for the period of four months will be £45,000 (including on-costs).

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has not been undertaken. It is a legal requirement for the Council to appoint a Head of Paid Service.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 An impact assessment has not been carried out. This appointment has been made on a fixed-term basis to cover the role.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 All council officers have delegated responsibility for ensuring that the Council delivers against its Corporate Strategy with regards to tackling the climate and

ecological emergencies. This will include ensuring that the Council leads by example in all its activities, making the radical changes needed, as well as taking a lead role in influencing and working with partners across all sectors locally, regionally and nationally and ensuring wide and deep citizen engagement.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 If the application is turned down, an interim Chief Executive would need to be appointed to ensure that there is sufficient leadership capacity during this period. This would cost around £72,000 for the four month period (assuming a day rate of £1500 per day 3 days per week). With the Chief Operating Officer vacancy and one relatively new Executive Director this poses a significant risk during a busy period when the budget is being set.

9.2 There is no internal candidate who could cover the role for this period.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 This report has been cleared by the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer for circulation.

Contact person	<i>Cherry Bennett, Director of People & Change</i>
Background papers	
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	