

Report to:	QSMT
Report by:	David Hamilton SIC
Meeting Date:	19 Feb 2025
Subject/ Title: (and VC no)	Recruitment of Head of Business Support
Attached Papers (title and VC no)	VC223966

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this Committee Report (CR) is to seek agreement from the Senior Management Team (SMT) regarding the recruitment of a Head of Business Support (HOBS).

Recommendation and actions

2. I recommend that the SMT:
 - (i) Rename Corporate Services, "Business Support"
 - (ii) approve the business case for one full-time, permanent HOBS.
 - (iii) move to external recruitment
 - (iv) agree the Selection Panel shall be made up of:
 - (a) Scottish Information commissioner, (SIC), Head of Policy and Information (HOPI), Head of Enforcement (HOE) and support from a member of the CST team
3. I recommend that this CR is published as set out in paragraph 31.

Executive summary

Business case for recruitment of Head of Business Support

Reasons for recruitment

4. The Commissioner promotes and enforces the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (the EIRs).
5. The Commissioner has statutory duties to promote FOI law, contributing to openness and transparency in Scottish public authorities. It is essential to the effective, efficient and economic operation of his office that a business support structure is in place, led by a Department Head.
6. The post of Head of Corporate Services has remained vacant for some number of months and duties covered by the temporary promotion of a member of CST staff. This has put strain on the CST function.
7. The Temporary CST Manager has also intimated a desire to retire in June 2025. This is a business critical post, essential for the operation of the Commissioner's office and the fulfilment of his statutory duties.

8. A review of the job specification has been undertaken by the Commissioner and he wishes to redefine the post and regrade it accordingly. Following consultation with other office holders a job description has been prepared that aligns to similar posts in their offices.
9. The Head of Business Support shall be a member of the Senior Management Team.
10. The current Head of Corporate Services is a Grade 6 post. If the recruitment is agreed, and if selection is successful, this post will generally be appointed at the start of:
 - (i) the Grade 5 pay scale level

Recruitment method

11. The C5 Recruitment and Selection Procedures provide that posts will be advertised externally.

Application process

12. The procedures set out in the C5 Recruitment and Selection Procedures will be followed.

Selection panel

13. The Selection Panel should consist of SIC, HOPI and HOE with the admin support.

Renaming of Corporate Support

14. As this post is being reprofiled and regraded it is appropriate to rename the post. It also represents an opportunity to reboot the Corporate Services function to align it with the Commissioner's Strategic Objectives and Operational Plan.

Risk impact

15. Failure to fill the post will have a negative impact on both strategic and operational risk and may lead to external criticism.
16. Recruitment should be a considered and planned process, carried out in accordance with approved policy and procedures, and there is a potential governance risk if this is not done.
17. If the required appointment is made this will mitigate work output risks and avoid any staff resource underspend.

Equalities impact

18. In carrying out any recruitment, we need to comply with the Equality Act 2010, relevant equality policies and relevant employment legislation. The C5 Recruitment and Selection Policy and the C5 Recruitment and Selection Procedures help us to do this and should be followed in this recruitment. If the policy and procedures are followed there should be no equality impact arising from this recruitment.
19. Given the operational need for a HOBS the posts will be full time but be open to flexible working arrangements, including job share in line with the Commissioner's employment policies.

Privacy impact

20. There will be no direct impact. We have policies and procedures in place to ensure that personal information related to employment and selection and appointment processes is held in a fair and proper way and processed appropriately.

Resources impact

21. The HOBS post falls within the current staff complement and can therefore be met from within current resources.
22. The recruitment exercise itself will have an impact on the work of both the P&I and Corporate Services Teams. This will be short term although there will also be an impact from the induction and training that will need to take place following selection and appointment. Failing to proceed with the recruitment going forward will have an impact on the Commissioner's ability to comply with our statutory responsibilities and with operational plans and the Strategic Plan 2024/2028.

Operational/ strategic plan impact

23. Failure to recruit would affect our ability to deliver commitments in the Strategic Plan 2024-28 and the Operational Plans 2024-25.

Records management impact (including any key documents actions)

24. None

Consultation and Communication

25. Consultation has taken place with the SMT

Publication

26. I recommend that this CR is published in full.