

**APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT TO CABINET MEMBER**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL SERVICES**

**AGENDA ITEM: 3**

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**PORTFOLIO : LEADER (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PARTNERSHIPS)  
(COUNCILLOR PHIL BALE)**

**Reason for this Report**

1. To consider the appointment of a new Assistant to Cabinet Member – Housing and Tackling Poverty.

**Background**

2. Article 7.5 of the Council's Constitution provides that:

*“The Cabinet may appoint Councillors to act as assistants to the Cabinet as the Cabinet considers necessary and appropriate. Their role will be:*

- (a) to assist the Cabinet collectively;*
- (b) to liaise with the Chairs and members of relevant Scrutiny Committees; and*
- (c) to act as observers at meetings of the Cabinet or a committee of the Cabinet.*

*Assistants to the Cabinet may not vote on any matters before the Cabinet, neither may they substitute for a Cabinet Member at a meeting of the Cabinet nor in any decision-making role.”*

3. On 15 May 2014, the Cabinet agreed to create three new Assistant to Cabinet Member roles in order to provide additional support to Cabinet portfolios. Assistants to Cabinet Members that are appointed by the Cabinet can work with a Cabinet Member or Cabinet Members in taking forward particular projects or programmes and can represent the Cabinet at any meeting or function which does not involve any decision-making role.

4. On 11 June 2015, the Cabinet agreed the appointment of the following Members as Assistants to Cabinet Members for 2015/16:
  - Councillor Sam Knight – Technology, Innovation and Skills
  - Councillor Chris Weaver – Active Travel & Wellbeing (incl. Libraries)
  - Councillor Darren Williams – Housing and Tackling Poverty
5. Following the resignation of Councillor Darren Williams as the Assistant to Cabinet Member – Housing and Tackling Poverty on 4 November 2015, it is proposed that Councillor Caro Wild be appointed to the vacant Assistant to Cabinet Member position for the remainder of the 2015/16 municipal year.
6. A copy of the Role Description for Assistants to Cabinet Members that has been agreed previously by the Cabinet is attached as Appendix A to this report.

#### **Reason for Recommendation**

7. To approve the appointment of a new Assistant to Cabinet Member.

#### **Legal Implications**

8. The Role Description stipulates that an Assistant to a Cabinet Member cannot be a member of a Scrutiny Committee which scrutinises his or her Cabinet Member's portfolio. This is because the national Member Code of Conduct creates a prejudicial interest in any item of business at a scrutiny committee concerning to a cabinet decision or action taken when that member was a member of the cabinet at that time.

#### **Financial Implications**

9. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Cabinet is recommended to approve the appointment of Councillor Caro Wild as the Assistant to Cabinet Member – Housing and Tackling Poverty.

#### **MARIE ROSENTHAL**

Director

12 February 2016

*The following appendix is attached:*

Appendix A: Assistant to Cabinet Member Role Description

*The following background papers have been taken into account:*

Cabinet Report, 11 June 2015

Cabinet Report, 12 June 2014

Cabinet Report, 15 May 2014

### **ASSISTANTS TO CABINET MEMBERS – Article 7.5 Cardiff Constitution**

The Cabinet may appoint Councillors to act as Assistants to the Cabinet as the Cabinet considers necessary and appropriate. Their role will be:

- (a) To assist the Cabinet collectively
- (b) To liaise with the Chairs and members of relevant Scrutiny Committees and
- (c) To act as observers at meetings of the Cabinet or a committee of Cabinet

### **ROLE DESCRIPTION**

1. Assistants to Cabinet Members are members appointed by the Cabinet to work with a Cabinet Member or Cabinet Members and deputise for them for any function except decision-making subject to the limitations set out below.
2. This includes taking forward particular projects or programmes. Most Assistant posts will range across the functions of the Cabinet Member but it is a matter for each individual Cabinet Member, after discussion with the Leader of the Council, to establish any limits or conditions on the ways in which the Assistant will operate. Any limitations on the role of Assistant which the Cabinet Member wishes to impose should be a matter of record, to be copied to the Leader of the Council and the Monitoring Officer.
3. The role of Assistant to Cabinet member does not attract a special responsibility allowance
4. Assistants to Cabinet Members may:
  - Undertake specific tasks, research and investigations and attend conferences, seminars and meetings as requested by the Cabinet Member so as to keep abreast of current policy and development initiatives.
  - Deputise for a Cabinet Member at Cabinet Briefings.
  - Deputise for a Cabinet Member (but not vote) at Cabinet meetings.
  - Deputise for the Cabinet Member at formal and informal functions except for official openings or ceremonies where it is appropriate for the Cabinet Member to have a role in which case, in the event of the absence of the Cabinet Member, the Lord Mayor will normally represent the Council.
  - To liaise with non-executive members in order to ensure that the Cabinet Member is fully aware of issues which are of concern to members.
  - Appear before a Scrutiny Committee where the Cabinet Member cannot attend or where the Assistant has focussed on the particular project or programme. (However, the Scrutiny Committee may also request the Cabinet Member to attend on a further occasion).
  - Be a member of a Scrutiny Committee which does not relate to his or her Cabinet Member's portfolio.

- Be a member of a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group.
5. However, an Assistant to a Cabinet Member cannot:
- take decisions
  - deputise for a Cabinet Member at Council Meetings
  - be a member of the Scrutiny Committee which scrutinises his or her Cabinet Member's portfolio

2 April 2014