

SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE

14 JULY 2026

APPOINTMENT OF MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ENTERPRISE OXFORDSHIRE

Report by Director of Economy and Place

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Agree to the appointment of the candidate recommended by the Enterprise Oxfordshire Board to the position of Managing Director of Enterprise Oxfordshire, outlined in Exempt Annex 1.**

Executive Summary

1. This report sets out the recruitment process for the Managing Director of Enterprise Oxfordshire, leading to the recommendation of the interview panel and Enterprise Oxfordshire Board.
2. Appointment of senior staff is a Reserved Matter per the company's articles of association and therefore must be approved by the Shareholder Committee. This report, therefore, enables the Shareholder Committee to decide whether to accept the recommendation of the Enterprise Oxfordshire Board.
3. The final interviews were scheduled for 29 June 2026 so, at the time the report was submitted, the final recommendation was not yet known. In line with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, it is proposed that the identity of – and information concerning – the preferred candidate and the terms and conditions of their contract is provided in an exempt annex at the conclusion of the interview process.

Exempt Information

4. In line with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Sections 1 & 2, the identity of – and information concerning – the preferred candidate and the terms and conditions of their contract is provided in an exempt annex following the conclusion of the interview process.

Background

5. In September 2025, the then Chief Executive of Enterprise Oxfordshire resigned. The Head of Future Economy and Innovation at the County Council was appointed as Interim Managing Director, in parallel with his role at the County Council, by the Shareholder Committee in November 2025 and has continued in that role to date, with a view to an open selection process to recruit a Managing Director for an initial two-year term.
6. A benchmarking exercise was carried out by Turning Point HR, a company specialising in pay and rewards, to ensure an appropriate salary was agreed, on behalf of both Enterprise Oxfordshire and the County Council.
7. Enterprise Oxfordshire subsequently retained Penna to lead the executive search and Penna took responsibility for the recruitment campaign and for providing the list of candidates.

Process

8. Over 60 individuals applied with 22 candidates being identified as high quality candidates. Of these 22 candidates, 8 were selected for first stage interview based on the suitability of their application against the job description and person specification.
9. These 8 candidates were interviewed during the week commencing 8th June 2026. The interview panel consisted of the Enterprise Oxfordshire Leadership Team: Nick Glover (Interim Managing Director); Helen Ryan-Wallis (Director of Strategic Development & Programmes) and Helen Brind (Director of Business and Skills).
10. At their first stage interview, candidates were assessed on their strategic leadership; understanding of Oxfordshire's economy; ability to lead across complex partnerships; their track record of delivery and impact; and leadership and cultural fit. The process was highly competitive and resulted in the three highest-scoring candidates being recommended for final stage interview.
11. The final stage interview was held on 29 June 2026. The panel was comprised of:
 - Alex Reip (Chair of Enterprise Oxfordshire Board)
 - Cllr Laura Gordon (Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy)
 - Helen Brind (Director of Business and Skills – Enterprise Oxfordshire)
 - Kim Sawyer (Programme Director – Devolution, County Council & Non-Executive Director, Enterprise Oxfordshire)
 - Robin Rogers (Director of Economy and Place – County Council)
12. Candidates delivered a presentation setting out their vision for Oxfordshire and the role of Enterprise Oxfordshire in delivering it, answering questions on their leadership, experience, partnership working style and cultural fit.

13. As the interview panel met after the deadline of submission for this report, the outcome was not yet known. Should a preferred candidate be identified, details will be shared with the Enterprise Oxfordshire Board first to secure their approval and subsequently with the Shareholder Committee at the earliest opportunity.

Financial Implications

14. The salary has been proposed following a benchmarking exercise undertaken by TPP. The salary costs are provided for within Enterprise Oxfordshire's budget. There are no financial implications for Oxfordshire County Council associated with the appointment of the Managing Director.

Comments checked by:

Rob Finlayson, Strategic Finance Business Partner
(Rob.Finlayson@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Legal Implications

15. The recruitment process was in accordance with applicable legislation, the Enterprise Oxfordshire's Constitution, its policies and procedures and good practice. Withholding the identity of the preferred candidate is concurrent with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, which provides that information relating to an individual (or that is likely to reveal their identity), and information relating to negotiations in connection with labour relations, should be withheld from publication.

Comments checked by:

Busola Akande, Solicitor, (Busola.Akande@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Staff Implications

16. This post is independent and the successful candidate is not an employee of the County Council. Therefore, there are no staffing implications.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

17. The recruitment process was designed and delivered in line with Enterprise Oxfordshire's commitment to the equal opportunities. A thorough, fair and transparent selection process was undertaken, ensuring all candidates were assessed objectively against the role requirements. The role specification and candidate brief were designed with a clear emphasis on inclusive leadership and community impact, and the search strategy was intentionally broad and intersectional, leveraging national and regional networks. This resulted in 60

