

Chris Oglesby – Client and Candidate



Chris Oglesby is CEO of Bruntwood, one of the biggest and most highly regarded property companies in the North of England, with a turnover of £87 million and fixed assets of £982 million.

Recognising the need to strengthen his senior management team, Chris contacted Robinson Keane and a number of other headhunters to discuss his decision to appoint a Group Chief Strategy Officer. We listened carefully to what he was trying to achieve in organisational terms, gained a deep understanding of the values and culture of Bruntwood, and then questioned whether this was really the best way of achieving the objectives. After further work and considerable discussion, Robinson Keane were briefed to handle the appointment of a Chief Operating Officer:

“Robinson Keane really got to grips with the issues and the specific nuances of the role, and were able to play them back to me in writing with great clarity. They also spent a day and a half interviewing my entire senior management team on a one-to-one basis and provided me with a feedback report, which was very helpful in fine-tuning the definition of the role, helping to get buy-in, and as a briefing document for the new COO.”

“We knew this would be a difficult assignment, but the appointment of Rowena Burns hit the bulls-eye. She has now been in place for eight months and is proving to be an excellent appointment, albeit in completely changed economic circumstances.”

We have also worked with Chris in his role as a Board Member of City South Partnership, Manchester, a public/private development partnership:

“I was pleased to see that Robinson Keane had been given the task of finding our first CEO. This was a challenging brief, given the multiple stakeholders, but in Jackie Potter we have a CEO who has all the required intellectual and interpersonal skills, the ability to manage the complexity of the role and the determination to drive the project forward.”

“It is important to remember that Robinson Keane are headhunters. Both of these appointments were made without advertising.”

Chris has also dealt with Robinson Keane from the other side of the fence - as a candidate. When we were instructed to recruit a Business Leadership Council for the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities, we approached Chris to join, which he has now done:

“As I had expected, the written brief was excellent, and the subsequent meeting resolved any uncertainties I had. Administration of the interviews went well, and the follow-up was prompt and thorough. The team appointed to the Council is very strong, with a good blend of skills, sectors and people. It is still early days, but we definitely have the right people to make it work.”

So how would Chris summarise what's distinctive about Robinson Keane?

“Firstly, they could not be more thorough in their briefing. Secondly, they really understand issues of cultural fit, which are so important. Since they are so thorough in getting under the skin of the brief, and really know what they are looking for, it's not surprising that they come up with the goods.”