

**CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**

**23 FEBRUARY 2009**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**SECTION 151 OFFICER ARRANGEMENTS**

**1 Introduction and Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend changes to the Council's current arrangements for a Section 151 Officer and Chief Finance Officer.

**2 Wards Affected**

- 2.1 All

**3 Effect on Policy**

- 3.1 Not applicable

**4 Contact Officer(s)**

- 4.1 James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager (Ext 1587).

**5 Background**

- 5.1 In accordance with Local Government Act 1972, there is a statutory requirement on the authority to designate three statutory officers; Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer/ Chief Finance Officer, who is required to be a suitably qualified individual, holding a CCAB recognised professional accountancy qualification, and preferably a member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA) .
- 5.2 In July 2008 the Council received a report detailing that the Chief Executive (in consultation with the Monitoring Officer) had exercised her emergency powers to appoint Phil O'Dell as the authority's Section 151 Officer on an interim basis. Phil O'Dell has fulfilled this role since that time.
- 5.3 Julie Evans, the Council's Strategic Director, Customer Service and Resources, has recently qualified as a CCAB accountant with full elected membership of CIPFA. Phil O'Dell's contract with the Council comes to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 and it is proposed that Julie Evans becomes the Council's Section 151 Officer from 1<sup>st</sup> April

2009.

## **6 Risk Assessment, Financial Effects and Contributions to Efficiency Savings**

- 6.1 Risk assessment – The designation of a Section 151 and Chief Finance Officer is a statutory requirement.
- 6.2 Financial effects – The move from the current interim arrangements to these proposed permanent arrangements will save the Council money.

## **7 Recommendation**

- 7.1 That Strategic Director, Customer Service and Resources be appointed as the Council's Section 151 and Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make consequential amendments to the constitution to enable this decision.
- 7.2 That it be noted that Julie Evans has nominated the Chief Accountant , Karen Curtin, as Deputy Section 151 and Deputy Chief Finance Officer authorised to act in her absence.

Background Papers:

- (a) None