

Cherwell District Council

Council

17 May 2016

Appointment of Section 151 Officer

Report of Chief Executive

This report is public

Purpose of report

To designate the appropriate officer of the Council as its Section 151 Officer as required by the Constitution and legislation.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To appoint Paul Sutton as the Council's Section 151 Officer with effect from 19 May 2016, subject to South Northamptonshire Council resolving in similar terms, and to request him to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced Deputy Section 151 Officer from the same date.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 In accordance with section 151 of the Local Government Act 1982 and section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 there is a statutory requirement on the Authority to designate one of its officers as its Section 151 Officer/Chief Finance Officer. The individual is required to be a suitably qualified accountant holding a CCAB recognised professional accountancy qualification.
- 2.2 Following the appointment of a Chief Finance Officer it is necessary for full Council to designate the post holder as the Council's Section 151 Officer. Appointment of a Section 151 Officer is reserved to full Council by legislation and the Constitution.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The most senior Finance role in any organisation plays a critical role in ensuring the overall success of the organisation or business. In local government each Council is required to appoint a statutory finance officer, known as a Section 151 Officer, who must hold a recognised qualification. The designation of Section 151 Officer

brings with it various personal duties and accountabilities which are set down in the relevant legislation.

- 3.2 Martin Henry, the former Section 151 Officer for both this Council and South Northamptonshire Council, left the Councils on 31 March 2016. Accordingly, Paul Sutton, Head of Finance and Procurement, was appointed as the Council's interim Section 151 Officer to cover the period between Mr Henry's departure and the formal appointment of the Chief Finance Officer and that post holder's designation as Section 151 Officer.
- 3.3 The Joint Commissioning Committee has resolved to appoint Paul Sutton as the Council's new Chief Finance Officer. Accordingly it is necessary for full Council formally to appoint Mr Sutton as the Section 151 Officer for the Council as well. The designation will be effective from 19 May 2016 subject to South Northamptonshire Council resolving in similar terms at its meeting on 18 May 2016.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Council is legally required to designate one of its officers as its Section 151 Officer. The Chief Finance Officer is the appropriate post holder to be designated with this statutory role.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 There has been no formal consultation with regard to the recommendation contained in this report but the Joint Commissioning Committee was fully involved in the recruitment of the Chief Finance Officer.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To appoint an alternative officer of the Council as Section 151 Officer. This is rejected because the Chief Finance Officer is the most senior qualified finance officer employed by the Council and it is therefore appropriate for the post holder to be designated as such.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

George Hill, Corporate Finance Officer, 01295 751731,
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Legal Implications

- 7.2 It is a legal requirement that the Councils appoint one of their suitably qualified officers as the Section 151 Officer pursuant to Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. This must be done by each full Council.

Comments checked by:

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8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

All.

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Not applicable – this report is made pursuant to a statutory requirement.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council.

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
N/A	N/A
Background Papers	
N/A	
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