

Appendices:
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NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

9th July 2018

Agenda Status: Public

Directorate: Borough Secretary

Report Title	Appointment of Chief Finance Officer (Section 151)
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To confirm the appointment of the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151), following the end of the provision of this service by LGSS.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Council confirms the appointment of Stuart McGregor as Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) from the 1st June 2018.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The position of Chief Finance Officer is critical to the governance of Councils. Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires every local authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs.
- 3.1.2 Section 151 requires Council to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs.
- 3.1.3 The Chief Finance Officer has a number of statutory duties which include the duty to report any unlawful financial activity involving the authority or failure to set or keep to a balanced budget. The Chief Finance Officer also has a number of statutory powers in order to allow the role to be carried out.

- 3.1.4 Until 31st May 2018, the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) was provided to the Council by LGSS through a Partnering and Delegation Agreement.
- 3.1.5 On the 22nd January 2018, Council resolved that Stuart McGregor be appointed as Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) from 18th February, until 1st June 2018, or later if otherwise agreed as being needed until a permanent appointment be made.
- 3.1.6 On 22nd January 2018 Council also resolved that the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) role revert back to the Council's employment on a full-time basis post 1st June 2018, or as soon as reasonably practicable, and that recruitment to that permanent position be undertaken.
- 3.1.7 The Council has brought the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) role back in-house from 1st June 2018, so that the post holder is employed directly by the Council as an interim on a fixed-term basis. Due to the ongoing discussions in the County about the potential creation of unitary authorities in the County from 2020, the role will not be recruited to permanently.
- 3.1.8 From 1st June 2018, Stuart McGregor continued to undertake the Chief Finance Officer role. However, the basis of his engagement was changed, so that he became engaged by the Council directly and was no longer provided through the LGSS Contract. Full Council is therefore asked to confirm the appointment of Stuart McGregor as Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) from the 1st June 2018.
- 3.1.9 As stated in the report to Council in January, Mr McGregor has accountancy experience in the public sector spanning 30 years, the last 14 of which has been primarily in local government - including as Chief Finance Officer (Section 151) for Havant BC and East Hampshire BC, North Wiltshire DC and, most recently, Wycombe DC. He has also acted as Head of Paid Service.
- 3.1.10 The appointment to the post is ordinarily undertaken by the Appointments and Appeals Committee however, due to continuing changes in circumstances this has been referred to Council for confirmation.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 None

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 There are no resource implications arising directly from this Report. The anticipated revenue budget costs of bringing the role in-house were identified to Full Council when it resolved on 22nd January 2018 that the post should revert to the Council's employment.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to appoint an Officer to act as its Chief Finance Officer, to be responsible for the administration of the Council's financial affairs.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 There are none.

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 None

5. Background Papers

5.1 None

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