



Appointment of Strategic Director of Corporate Resources; designation of statutory roles and recruitment to post of Strategic Director of Communities and Place

Purpose

- 1.1 The designation of a Chief Finance Officer is required under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. The role is currently being fulfilled on an interim basis by the current Strategic Director of Corporate Resources, Don McLure.

A recruitment exercise was undertaken during April 2019 to fill this post on a permanent basis, resulting in a cross-party panel of councillors unanimously selecting Paul Simpson to become the Strategic Director of Corporate Resources. A decision of Council is now required to make the designation of Paul Simpson as Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer.

- 1.2 This report also seeks to make arrangements for an Appointments Panel to select a candidate to fulfil the role of Strategic Director of Communities and Place, following the announcement that Christine Durrant will be leaving the authority on 30 June 2019.

The recruitment exercise to appoint a successor has not yet commenced; Council approval is required under the Pay Policy to appoint to positions attracting salaries in excess of £100,000.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the appointment of Mr Paul Simpson as the Strategic Director of Corporate Resources, and to designate him the statutory role of Chief Finance Officer as required under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 with effect from 1 August 2019.
- 2.2 To approve the designation of Mr Paul Simpson as the council's Deputy Chief Executive with effect from 1 August 2019.
- 2.3 To approve the principle of a recruitment process to the post of Strategic Director of Communities and Place, as required under the council's Pay Policy, and for the Appointments Panel to confirm an appointment.

Reason

- 3.1 To ensure compliance with the Council Constitution and relevant legislation, whilst also ensuring recruitment to the position of Strategic Director of Communities and Place can proceed as expeditiously as possible.

Supporting information

Appointment of Strategic Director of Corporate Resources and Designation of Section 151 Officer

4.1 Every local authority is required to designate a suitably qualified officer to act as Chief Finance Officer under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. The role is usually referred to as 'the Section 151 Officer' and is currently filled by the current Strategic Director of Corporate Resources, Don McLure on an interim basis.

4.2 Council approved the principle of an Appointments Panel confirming an appointment to the post of Strategic Director of Corporate Resources on 23 May 2018. A comprehensive assessment centre was held on Wednesday 17 April 2019 and an interview by a cross-party Appointments Panel took place on Thursday 18 April 2019.

Paul Simpson was unanimously selected as the panel's preferred candidate.

4.3 Following the necessary consultation with Council Cabinet Members, in accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, an offer of employment has been made. The report is now before Council for the designation of the statutory role of Chief Finance Officer.

4.4 Paul Simpson joins the authority from Milton Keynes Council, where he has been employed as the Corporate Director – Resources since 2017. Prior to that, he was the Interim Accountable Officer (Chief Executive) at Cannock Chase, South Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula and Stafford and Surrounds CCGs.

A qualified CIPFA accountant for 20 years, Paul has a strong local government background, having been a Chief Finance Officer for over 10 years, including as the Section 151 Officer in three upper tier authorities.

Designation of Deputy Chief Executive and appointment of Strategic Director of Communities and Place

4.5 Owing to the imminent departure of Christine Durrant, Strategic Director of Communities and Place, it is proposed for Paul Simpson to also take on the responsibility of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

Whilst not constitutionally required, this is presented to Council for approval at recommendation 2.2.

4.6 It is proposed that a recruitment exercise is now undertaken in order for an Appointments Panel to select a suitable candidate.

While the Council Constitution permits the panel to make an appointment to the post of Strategic Director, the council's Pay Policy requires that any position attracting a salary in excess of £100,000 is subject to a vote of Council. That approval is sought at recommendation 2.3.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 The appointment to the post of Strategic Director of Corporate Resources has been agreed by a cross-party appointments panel and has been subject to a seven day period of consultation with members of the Council Cabinet to register any objection, as required under the Officer Employment Procedure Rules contained within part seven of the Constitution (OE11-12). No objections were received.

Other options

- 6.1 To defer any decision on the designation of statutory roles until the next scheduled meeting of Council or to summon an Extraordinary Meeting of Council, should a designation be required prior to that point.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 Funding for these posts is already established. The Strategic Director of Corporate Resources and Deputy Chief Executive will receive a salary of £131,630 and the Strategic Director of Communities and Place will receive a salary of £114,711 - £126,180.

Legal implications

- 8.1 Approval of the recommendations will ensure compliance with the requirement to designate a statutory officer under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Other significant implications

- 9.1 None directly arising.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal		
Finance	Don McLure, Strategic Director of Corporate Resources	14 May 2019
Service Director(s)	Emily Feenan, Acting Director of Legal, Procurement and Democratic Services, and Monitoring Officer	14 May 2019
Report sponsor	Carole Mills, Chief Executive	14 May 2019
Other(s)	Andrea Cauldwell, Recruitment Manager	14 May 2019

Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	None