

Meeting:	Employment panel
Meeting date:	12 October 2016
Title of report:	Recruitment of chief finance officer (section 151 officer)
Report by:	Director for environment, communities and corporate

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To agree the recruitment process, timetable and role profile for the chief finance officer enabling the recruitment and selection process to commence.

Recommendations

THAT:

- (a) the role profile at appendix 1 for the post of chief finance officer be agreed and all other terms and conditions associated with the post remain the same; and**
- (b) recruitment for a substantive chief finance officer be initiated.**

Alternative options

- 1 It is a statutory requirement that the council employs a section 151 officer. Whilst it is open to Council to designate this function to another post (excluding the monitoring officer), given the council's challenging financial position it is vital that the council has an experienced chief finance officer in position to lead what will be a challenging budget setting process and handling on-going budget management processes.

Reasons for recommendations

- 2 To ensure effective leadership of the council's budget planning process and ongoing financial management.

Key considerations

- 3 The council's director of resources resigned in September 2016.
- 4 An interim director of resources, Mark Taylor, has been appointed and will start on 31 October 2016 for a period of up to 6 months. At Council on 30 September 2016 members approved the employment panel's recommendation to designate the interim director of resources as section 151 officer.
- 5 The council needs experienced and robust financial leadership in place and wishes to expedite the recruitment process of a substantive post holder and designate that post holder as the substantive section 151 officer.
- 6 Under the council's employment rules (para 4.9.3.7) the appointment of a statutory chief officer including approval of the terms and conditions of employment, is undertaken by the employment panel. The employment panel will then make a recommendation to Council for formal designation of the post holder as section 151 officer.
- 7 A draft role profile for the post is attached at appendix 1. It is proposed to change the scope of the role to chief finance officer and responsibility for property will remain within this post.
- 8 The Hay job evaluation system is used for chief officer posts and the proposed profile, having been reviewed, has been confirmed as remaining at the same salary level as AD level salaries rarely change with responsibilities of a similar magnitude being added or taken away. All other terms and conditions will remain the same.

Recruitment process

The timetable for managing the recruitment and selection process is outlined below.

Activity	Date	By Whom
Select agency and agree brief	12 October - 18 October	Hoople Resourcing
Candidate search and first sift	18 October - 8 November	Agency
Long listing	18 November	Employment Panel
Short listing	Late November	Employment Panel
(Final) Interviews	Early December	Employment Panel
Appointment made	Early December	Employment Panel
Designation of post holder as section 151 officer	16 December	Council

Substantive s151 starts in post	Jan - March 2017 (depending on notice period)	
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- 9 Given the strategic importance of the role and the risks to the council's ongoing financial performance, it is proposed that a nationwide search is undertaken and that a specialist recruitment agency supports the recruitment and selection of the best candidates on behalf of the council. The cost of this will be capped at £20k

Community impact

- 10 Working with the council's Management Board, this role will ensure that the council's directorates and services are supported to meet the challenges imposed by financial reductions which, without change, would be more likely to result in less effective service delivery in future and impact the ability of the council to achieve the objectives of its corporate plan.

Equality duty

- 11 The recommendations in this report and the recruitment and selection process take full account of this legislation and will ensure our equality duty is met.

Financial implications

- 12 The establishment budget for this post is available and any appointment will be made within this budget.
- 13 The additional costs of recruiting to this post will be capped at a maximum of £20k and these recruitment costs will be met from within the HR&OD budget.

Legal implications

- 14 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires all local authorities to 'make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs' and to 'secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs'.
- 15 Under Part 3 of the council's constitution, the duty to designate an officer as the section 151 officer is reserved to full Council. Under the council's employment rules arrangements for the appointment of a statutory chief officer are to be made by the employment panel which also approves the terms and conditions of employment and makes a recommendation to full Council.

Risk management

- 16 The risks of not being able to successfully recruit to the role have been considered and mitigated by proposing the council invests in specialist recruitment expertise to undertake the search for the right candidate.

Consultees

- 17 None.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Proposed role profile

Background papers

None identified.