

## Staff Appointments Committee

<b>Report Title:</b>	Business Case for the Recruitment of a Head of Finance (and Section 151 Officer)
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	27 March 2017
<b>Lead Councillor/s:</b>	Councillor Colin Noble, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development Councillor Richard Smith, Cabinet Member for Finance and Heritage Beccy Hopfensperger, Cabinet Member for Adult Services Sandy Martin, Leader of the Labour Group Bill Mountford, Leader of the UKIP
<b>Local Councillor/s:</b>	All
<b>Director:</b>	Deborah Cadman OBE, Chief Executive
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### Brief summary of report

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek the approval of the Staff Appointments Committee for the initial Business Case for recruiting a permanent Head of Finance (and Section 151 Officer), for the reasons cited in this report, to agree to within the salary range indicated and manage the appointment though an internal and external process as set out in statutory guidance.

### Action recommended

2. The Committee is recommended to:
  - (a) Approve the Business Case for the recruitment of a permanent Head of Finance (and Section 151 Officer).
  - (b) Approve the salary range for the role.
  - (c) Agree that the recruitment process undertaken is carried out through an internal and external selection process.
  - (d) Delegate the function to appoint a Head of Finance (and Section 151

Officer) on a temporary basis to the Head of Paid Service (using their standing delegation for the “efficient management and execution of the County Council’s affairs”). This appointment to be agreed with the Leader of the Council and retrospectively ratified by the Staff Appointments Committee.

### **Reason for recommendation**

3. The terms of reference for the Staff Appointment Committee include the following – “To approve the initial business case for the recruitment of a designated officer and any subsequent changes to the initial business case.”

### **Alternative options**

4. Engage in an internal only process to appoint to the post.
5. The Committee could agree to allocate Section 151 duties to a suitably qualified officer already in post – with no recruitment process.

### **Who will be affected by this decision?**

6. Existing Assistant Directors and Senior Managers within SCC.

### **Main body of report**

7. The initial business case is outlined as follows –
8. Section 8 of Part 8 ‘Officer Employment Rules’ of the Council’s Constitution, states that the Section 151 Officer is a ‘Designated Role’ under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (‘the Regulations’); in accordance with the Constitution. The post is therefore required.
9. Part 3 of the Constitution states that the Officer delegations for the Section 151 Officer are the following –

#### **Responsible Financial Officer (under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972)**

(a) All arrangements concerning financial planning, financial control, banking, accounts, income, insurances, investments, bonds, loans, leasing, borrowing (including methods of borrowing), trust and pension funds (within the scope of the Council’s pension fund investment policies that are approved by the Pension Fund Committee), the payment of creditors and the payment of salaries, wages, pension scheme benefits and gratuities.

(b) To be responsible for the provisions of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in respect of the need to maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council’s accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper internal audit practices.

(c) To be the Proper Officer of the Council in relation to the following statutory provisions

Local Government Act 1972, Section 115 – The officer whom all money due from every officer employed by the Council shall be paid. The officer to make any statutory declaration in connection with the transfer of securities.

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 - The officer to write off overpayment of salary allowances or pensions which occur as a result of the death of an employee or pensioner.

Local Government Finance Act 1988 - The officer responsible for reporting on unlawful expenditure decisions or where expenditure exceeds the resources available.

Local Government Act 2003 - The officer responsible for reporting on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of calculating the annual budget and precept, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

10. In addition to being accountable for the statutory functions of the broader finance role, the successful candidate will work closely with the Chief Executive, Cabinet, and Corporate Management Team to help implement the strategic agenda of the Council. They will be expected to make a significant contribution to the strategic vision and leadership of the organisation as a whole and to be a highly visible and influential leader within the Suffolk system of public services.
11. The Director of Resource Management has been the delegated Section 151 officer, however due to the retirement of the post holder this gives an opportunity for the Section 151 officer to be integrated into a more standalone finance post in the Corporate Structure, allowing capacity at senior level to be increased.
12. Specific objectives will be agreed on appointment and achievement against them will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Chief Executive.
13. In order to appoint a permanent Head of Finance it is recommended that an internal and external process to recruit is undertaken. The main rationale for this approach is to ensure we can attract the best possible candidate for the role and also include our internal employees.
14. Although still to be confirmed, proposed dates and details of the process are as follows:

Role advertised internally and externally	End of April 2017
Meeting to agree shortlist	End of May 2017
Final selection process and formal panel interviews	End of May/ early June 2017

15. A full and open selection process will be completed which will include a series of stages and exercises to assess performance against the criteria as

detailed in the job description and person specification agreed. This will include

- (a) Submission of a CV and supporting statement of interest
  - (b) Psychometric testing
  - (c) A formal panel interview
16. The decision to appoint will be made by a Staff Appointments Committee on conclusion of the process (due to be the end of May/ early June 2017) and will be subject to no objections (unless not material or well founded) from Cabinet members.
17. Due to an internal and external process being recommended, the timescales for appointment coinciding with the election will be extended, therefore we would expect the successful candidate to be able to step into the post sometime from early June therefore an internal cover process is being undertaken to ensure the Section 151 accountabilities are covered and a full handover can take place with the exiting post holder.

### **Pay Options**

18. It is advised that the salary is advertised within the JNC Assistant Director salary scale. Appointment salary will be based on existing salary level of applicants internally but within the banding for all applicants.

### **Sources of further information**

1. The Council's Constitution.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/the-council-and-its-committees/the-constitution/>