

Report of:	Chief Executive
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Submitted to:	Council
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Date:	24 May 2023
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Title:	Designation of Section 151 Officer role
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Report for:	Decision
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Status:	Public
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Strategic priority:	All
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Key decision:	Not applicable
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Why:	Not applicable
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Urgent:	Not applicable
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Why:	
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Executive summary

Approval was given by council on 22nd March 2023 for the temporary re-designation of the section 151 officer role to the Head of Financial Planning and Support pending an appointment by the Chief Executive.

An appointment has now been made (Debbie Middleton Interim Director of Finance) and therefore council are asked to consider the re-designation of the section 151 officer role back to the Director of Finance post.

Purpose

1. To designate the section 151 officer role to the Director of Finance.

Background and relevant information

2. On 23rd February Chief Officer Appointments Committee were asked to recommend to council the redesignation of the section 151 officer role to the Head of Financial Planning and Support on a temporary basis following pending recruitment to the post.
3. The Chair of Chief Officer Appointments Committee presented a report to council on the 22nd March 2023 recommending the re-designation on a temporary basis, and this was approved.
4. The Chief Executive has now appointed an Interim Director of Finance. Terms of reference for Chief Officer Appointments Committee delegate authority to the Head of Paid Service to make interim appointments of Directors up to six months and the interim appointment was made by the Chief Executive pursuant to that delegation.
5. The Director of Finance post would ordinarily carry the section 151 officer role. The intention of the previous arrangement was to ensure the council was not left in a position of not having a section 151 officer role as required by law.

What decision(s) are being recommended?

That the Council:

- Designate the section 151 officer role to the Director of Finance.

Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

6. The section 151 officer role would ordinarily be allocated to the Director of Finance role and temporary arrangements had been put in place to cover the period between the previous Director leaving (Helen Seechurn) and a new appointment being made (Debbie Middleton).

Other potential decision(s) and why these have not been recommended

7. Council could choose to leave the temporary arrangements in place however this places additional pressure on the Head of Financial Planning and Support and would leave the Director of Finance without statutory powers.

Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Legal

8. The council is required by law to have a section 151 officer in place.

Strategic priorities and risks

9. Risk of not meeting the multiple challenges the council faces, making the required improvements around governance improvement and children's services savings required.

Human Rights, Equality and Data Protection

10. No protected groups are affected by the decision.

Financial

11. There are no financial implications because of this decision.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Confirm to Director of Finance	Clive Heaphy Chief Executive	On approval

Appendices

Not applicable

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Council	Appointment of Chief Executive and arrangements for appointment of an interim section 151 officer	22 March 2023

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