

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Appointment of Section 151 Officer.

Meeting/Date: Council – 20 July 2022.

Executive Portfolio: Executive Leader

Report by: Managing Director.

Ward(s) affected: All.

Executive Summary:

Local Authorities have a duty under Section 151 of the Local Government Act to 'make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall ensure that one of their Officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs'.

The Council, at its meeting on 18 May 2022 appointed a S151 Officer on an interim basis pending the appointment of a new Director of Finance and Corporate Services as part of a restructure of the Council's Senior Management Team. Following the appointment of Karen Sutton to this role, it is now appropriate to formalise a more permanent arrangement for these duties to be undertaken.

It is

RECOMMENDED

- a) that Karen Sutton, be appointed permanently as the Council's Chief Financial Officer / Section 151 Officer; and
- b) that the Council's Constitution be updated to reflect the changes that result from this appointment.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Local Authorities have a duty under Section 151 of the Local Government Act to 'make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall ensure that one of their Officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs'.
- 1.2 Article 12 of the Council's Constitution describes the functions of the Chief Financial Officer / Section 151 Officer.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY?

- 1.1 The Council is required to designate one of its officers as the Chief Financial Officer under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. This appointment must be made by full Council.
- 2.1 It is a legal requirement that the Council has a Section 151 Officer in place and Section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires the Chief Financial Officer to be a member of one of the six chartered accountancy bodies in Great Britain and Ireland.
- 2.2 Pending the formalisation of more permanent arrangements as part of a restructure of the Council's Senior Management Team, the functions of the Chief Financial Officer / Section 151 Officer were undertaken on an interim basis by Philip Simkins. Now that the restructure is complete and an appointment has been made to the position of Director of Finance and Corporate Services it is now possible to consider a permanent arrangement for these duties to be undertaken.
- 2.3 It is therefore recommended that the newly appointed Director of Finance and Corporate Services, Karen Sutton should take on this role. The role of Deputy Section 151 Officer will continue to be undertaken by Sharon Russell-Surtees.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 3.1 This proposal enables the Council to fulfil its duty to appoint an Officer who is responsible for the Council's financial affairs and ensure that the necessary governance arrangements are in place for Huntingdonshire District Council.

4. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The District Council's Constitution

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