

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Council	Date:	9 June 2014
Subject:	Appointment of Chief Financial Officer (S151 Officer)		
Report Of:	Corporate Director of Resources		
Wards Affected:	All Wards		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Peter Gillett, Director of Resources		
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Appendices:	None		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To outline the legal requirements relating to the appointment of the Chief Finance Officer and to seek members' approval to appoint a replacement, in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is asked to **RESOLVE:**

- (1) That Jon Topping, Head of Financial Services be appointed as the Council's Chief Financial Officer (S151 Officer).

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires the council to make arrangements for the "proper administration of (its) financial affairs" and to "secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs" through the appointment of what is known as a Chief Finance Officer to advise the council. The Chief Finance Officer is also known as the S151 Officer and this terminology will be used throughout this report.
- 3.2 The S151 Officer is required by law to be a qualified accountant and a member of one of the professional bodies as outlined in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The legislative framework requires that either the S151 Officer is a direct employee of the council or that the S151 Officer is an employee of another council under a formal shared service arrangement.
- 3.3 Following the departure of the current S151 Officer, to another council, it is necessary to appoint a replacement to ensure the council complies with legislation and to ensure continuity and consistency in progressing the council's ongoing financial services improvement plan. Allocating S151 responsibilities to the postholder for the Head of Financial Services will also enable greater flexibility in

the recruitment of the replacement Corporate Director of Resources, rather than restricting the process to qualified accountants only.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to make the appointment from a suitably qualified employee. No other options have been identified.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 To meet the statutory requirements to appoint a S151 Officer for the City Council.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 Additional responsibilities given to the Head of Financial Services post as a result of these proposals will be reviewed in accordance with the Council's grading system.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report).

7.0 Legal Implications

7.1 The appointment of a Section 151 Officer is a statutory requirement under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires that the post holder is a member of one of the CCAB accountancy bodies.

7.2 Under the City Council's constitution, Council has the duty to appoint an Electoral Registration Officer and a Returning Officer for local government elections.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report).

8.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

8.1 Failure to appoint a S151 Officer would lead to the Council being in breach of its statutory duties.

9.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

9.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

10.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

10.1 There are no community safety implications resulting from this report.

Sustainability

10.2 There are no sustainability implications resulting from this report.

Staffing & Trade Union

10.3 There are no issues relating to trade unions arising from this report.

Background Documents: None