

Appendix A

DESIGNATION OF S151 OFFICER

I. Authority and responsibilities

- I.1 The Service Director Finance is the officer who has statutory responsibility to ensure the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs by virtue of section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and is required to hold appropriate skills and qualifications to undertake this role.
- I.2 The appointment of the Section 151 Officer/Responsible Finance Officer is personal to that officer and once appointed by Council, s/he has personal responsibilities to the Council as a whole.
- I.3 The Council's Constitution (Part A, Section 10.4) sets out the main duties of the Responsible Finance Officer/Section 151 Officer:
- (a) **To make sure decisions are lawful and financially prudent.** After consulting with the Head of Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer, the Responsible Finance Officer will report to the Full Council and the Council's external auditor if he/she considers that any proposal, decision or course of action would incur unlawful expenditure, or is unlawful and is likely to cause a loss or deficiency, or if the Council is about to enter an item of account unlawfully.
 - (b) **To administer financial affairs.** The Responsible Finance Officer will have responsibility for the administration of the financial affairs of the Council.
 - (c) **To contribute to corporate management.** The Responsible Finance Officer will contribute to the corporate management of the Council, in particular through the provision of professional financial advice.
 - (d) **To provide advice.** The Responsible Finance Officer or designee will provide advice on the scope of powers and authority to take decisions, maladministration, financial impropriety, probity and budget and policy framework issues to all Councillors and will support and advise Councillors and officers in their respective roles.
 - (e) **Providing financial information.** The Responsible Finance Officer or designee will provide financial information to the media, members of the public and the community.
 - (f) **Restrictions on Post.** The Responsible Finance Officer cannot be the Monitoring Officer. The Head of Paid Service and the Responsible Finance Officer can be the same person but the Responsible Finance Officer must be a qualified accountant.

- 1.4 The S151 Officer may deputise his duties to another officer, it may not, however, be to the Head of Paid Service or the Monitoring Officer who are not allowed to hold the S151 Officer role.

2. Recruitment

- 2.1 At its meeting held on 26 June 2020, the Chief Officer Appointments Panel approved for the recruitment process to commence to secure a permanent Service Director Finance.
- 2.2 On 5 October 2020, the Appointments Panel agreed to appoint Brendan Arnold as the Council's Service Director for Finance.
- 2.3 The Constitution requires notification of the proposed appointment to be given to each member of the Cabinet to give them an opportunity to object to the proposal. Such notification has been given to the Cabinet and no objections were received.

3. Council approval

The S151 responsibilities are included in the role profile of the Service Director for Finance but the designation of an officer to act as Responsible Finance Officer (S151 officer) is a decision for Full Council.