

Date of meeting:	17 March 2025
Title of Report:	Appointment of s151 Officer (Service Director Finance)
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director:	Tracey Lee (Chief Executive)
Author:	Annie Walker
Contact Email:	Annie.walker@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Click here to enter text.
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report This report updates Members on the appointment of the Council's Service Director for Finance following a recruitment process for a permanent appointment and seeks approval for the designation of the statutory role of Section 151 Officer.

At the meeting held on 20 September 2024, the Chief Officer Appointments Panel agreed to appoint Ian Trisk-Grove as the Service Director for Finance. The designation of an officer to act as the Council's Section 151 Officer, is a decision for the City Council.

Recommendations and Reasons

That Council approves the designation of the Service Director of Finance as the Council's Section 151 Officer with effect from 1 April 2025.

The appointment of a Section 151 Officer is a statutory requirement as outlined within Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 also requires that the post holder is a member of one of the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies.

The designation of an officer to act as the Council's Section 151 Officer is a decision for the City Council.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None, the appointment of a Section 151 Officer is a statutory requirement.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The delivery of the Corporate Plan is underpinned by the delivery of services that are accountable, flexible and efficient despite a reduction in resources.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The cost of employing a Service Director for Finance is included in the Council Budget 2025/26 and Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Financial Risks

The post is a permanent role with established budget contained within the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No implications.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

No implications.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment (if applicable)							
C	Climate Impact Assessment (if applicable)							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

1. Fin	2. DJN.24 .25.181	3. Leg & MO	4. LS/0033 90/20/L B/04/03 /2025	5. HR	6. CS.24. 25.036
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7. Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Tracey Lee

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes

Date agreed: 20/02/2025

8. Cabinet Member approval:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. W.', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

9. Date approved: 07/03/2025

DESIGNATION OF s151 OFFICER

1. Authority and Responsibilities

1.1 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.

1.2 The Council's Constitution (Part A, Section 10.4) sets out the main duties of the Responsible Finance Officer/Section 151 Officer:

- 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.
- To administer financial affairs. The Responsible Finance Officer will have responsibility for the administration of the financial affairs of the Council.
- 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.
- 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.
- Providing financial information. The Responsible Finance Officer or designee will provide financial information to the media, members of the public and the community.
- 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.

2. Recruitment Process

2.1 Following a recruitment process, candidates were interviewed by Members of the Chief Officer Appointment Panel on 20 September 2024 and, following Cabinet Approval, Ian Trisk-Grove was offered the permanent role, subject to a number of pre-employment checks that have now been completed.

3. Recommendations and Reasons

3.1 That Ian Trisk-Grove is designated as the Council's Section 151 Officer, from 1st April 2025, under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.