

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL MEETING – 25 JUNE 2009**

**APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To consider interim arrangements to meet the Council's statutory responsibility to appoint a Chief Financial Officer.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Interim Corporate Director: Resources be appointed with immediate effect as the Council's Chief Financial Officer, in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, for the period that the substantive post-holder is seconded or until a permanent Corporate Director: Resources is appointed;
- 2.2 That the Head of Finance & Audit be appointed with immediate effect as the Council's Deputy Chief Financial Officer in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, for the period that the substantive post-holder is seconded or until a permanent Corporate Director: Resources is appointed.

**3.0 SUMMARY**

- 3.1 Victor Brownlees, as Corporate Director: Resources, was appointed as the Council's Chief Financial Officer in June 2007. As Members are aware, he has been appointed as Interim Chief Executive pending the outcome of the recruitment of a new Chief Executive. Therefore, it is now necessary to appoint a Chief Financial Officer for an interim period while the substantive post-holder is seconded or until a permanent Corporate Director: Resources is appointed.

**4.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 4.1 Minute PR26, Policy and Resources Committee – 29 August 2001  
Council Minute No. 47 – Council – 23 November 2006  
Council Minute No. 23 – Council – 28 June 2007

## **5.0 INFORMATION**

- 5.1 The Council is required by Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to appoint a Chief Financial Officer. The functions of the Chief Financial Officer are set out in Article 12 of Part 2 of the Constitution, and include ensuring lawfulness and financial prudence of decision making, administration of financial affairs and contributing to the corporate management of the Council through the provision of professional financial advice.
- 5.2 The role of Chief Financial Officer is currently held by the Corporate Director: Resources. However, with effect from 22 May 2009 that post is temporarily vacant, as the postholder, Victor Brownlees, has taken up the duties of Interim Chief Executive. To cover the period of the vacancy, Paul Clifford has been appointed as Interim Corporate Director: Resources. It is, therefore, proposed that interim arrangements be agreed for the role of Chief Financial Officer to reflect the current staffing arrangements.
- 5.3 The Interim Corporate Director: Resources is a qualified accountant and is, therefore, appropriately qualified to hold the role of Chief Financial Officer.
- 5.4 The post of Head of Finance is currently nominated as deputy Chief Financial Officer. Following the appointment of the current Head of Finance, Paul Clifford, to the post of Interim Corporate Director: Resources, Ken Clarke has been appointed as Head of Finance & Audit. In line with current practice, it is recommended that he be nominated as Deputy Chief Financial Officer until substantive appointments have been made.

## **6.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

The appointment of the Interim Corporate Director: Resources was made following a competitive and open process within the Council.

## **7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

There are no implications directly arising from this report

## **8.0 LEGAL COMMENT**

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs.

## **9.0 LINKS WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

Good management of its financial affairs forms part of Building a Modern, Effective Council.

## **10.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND RISK**

The opportunities and risks associated with this decision have been identified and assessed. Arrangements will be put in place to manage the risks and maximise the opportunities that have been identified.

## **11.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The designated Chief Financial Officer plays an important role in the management of the authority's financial affairs, and in ensuring good corporate governance, internal control and the management of risks.

## **12.0 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

None directly

## **13.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Local Government Act 1972  
Council Constitution

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