

COUNCIL – 23 FEBRUARY 2021

PART I

8. RECRUITMENT OF SHARED DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND S151 OFFICER FOR THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL (TRDC) AND WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)

1. Summary

1.1 Recruitment of shared Director of Finance and S151 Officer

1.1.1 Following the promotion of the previous shared Director of Finance and S151 Officer, Joanne Wagstaffe, to the role of Chief Executive Officer, the role of Director of Finance and S151 Officer has been filled on an interim basis by Alison Scott, Head of Finance. This interim position commenced on 3 February 2020 and is continuing until a permanent shared Director of Finance and S151 Officer is appointed.

1.1.2 Council was informed in January 2020 that there would be a requirement to set up a Joint Panel for agreement by both Councils to make a permanent appointment to the post in due course once it had been advertised

1.2 Recruitment Process

1.2.1 The Director of Finance is a 'shared' post between TRDC and WBC with TRDC as the Lead Authority and the employer. However, all local authorities are required to appoint their own S151 Officer and this is achieved for WBC in effect by the shared Director of Finance being 'seconded' to Watford as S151 Officer. There needs to be special arrangements in place for the recruitment of a shared Director of Finance, which call for a politically balanced selection panel across both TRDC and WBC. The political make up across both councils total 49 Lib Dems, 11 Conservative, 13 Labour, 2 Independent Cllrs Group and 1 Independent. Therefore each Council will provide 3 members to the panel with representation that is proportionate to their own political make up.

1.2.2 Permission is now sought from Council to undertake a recruitment and selection process for a permanent shared Director of Finance on the basis outlined above. If approved, external advertising through the TRDC and WBC websites would commence on 25 February and a selection process would then be held week commencing 8 March. Assuming an appointment could be recommended, a further report to a special Council meeting would be made for the week commencing 15 March 2021. WBC would confirm that appointment at its Council meeting on 16 March 2021

2. Options and Reasons for Recommendations

2.1 The recommended option is to approve the recruitment process for a permanent Director of Finance and S151 Officer for TRDC and WBC as set out in 1.2.1 and 1.2.2.

2.2 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Health & Safety Implications

None specific.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 The current salary band is £82,989 - £97,891. Any appointment would also incur on costs on approximately 30% and is within the current budget for the post. WBC will contribute 50% of the salary and on-costs for the post.

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 As set out within the body of the report. The appointment of shared Director of Finance and S151 Officer is a statutory requirement and all local authorities are required to appoint a S151 Officer.

- 4.2 It is intended that the post holder will be a Three Rivers employee, as this is already the existing arrangement. The Councils have a formal agreement under section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 whereby the post holder's services are also provided to Watford. Under this provision an employee whose services are used by another local authority will be deemed to be an employee of that local authority for the purposes of discharging any of that authority's functions.

- 4.3 The Councils Officer Employment Procedure Rules (the Procedure Rules) deals with the appointment of Officers. Normally the appointment of a chief officer is done by or on a recommendation from a proportionate appointments panel made up of Council members as most recently constituted at Council on 9 June 2020 (Minute CL18/20 refers). As this is a shared role the intention is to agree a shared appointment panel to make that recommendation to both Councils as set out in 1.2.1 with the proportionality arrangements set out in 1.2.1 and not to follow the procedure Rules on this occasion

5 Equal Opportunities Implications

5.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	No – the requirement is for a shared Director of Finance and S151 Officer to replace an existing post
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	N/a

5.2 Impact Assessment

No Impact Assessment required

6. Staffing Implications

A permanent shared Director of Finance and S151 Officer will fulfil the Council's statutory requirement. The postholder will be a Council employee and shared with WBC

7. Communications and Website Implications -

7.1 The post will be advertised on the website and externally

8 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

8.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council’s duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

8.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Council’s corporate plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this plan.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Appointment of shared Director of Finance and S151 Officer cannot be made	Three Rivers DC does not fulfil its statutory obligations	Internal arrangements will be put in place to cover the requirements of the shared Director of Finance and S151 Officer	Treat	4

8.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely --> Remote Likelihood -----	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8

	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
	Impact			
	Low -----> Unacceptable			

Impact Score

4 (Catastrophic)

3 (Critical)

2 (Significant)

1 (Marginal)

Likelihood Score

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))

3 (Likely (21-79%))

2 (Unlikely (6-20%))

1 (Remote (≤5%))

8.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

9 Recommendation

9.1 That permission is granted to undertake a recruitment and selection process for the role of shared Director of Finance and S151 Officer for the Council and WBC.

9.2 That external advertising for the post commences on 25 February.

9.3 That for the appointment of the shared Director of Finance and S151 Officer the Council agrees to a joint appointment panel with Watford Borough Council as set out in the report who will make a recommendation to Council on the appointment

9.4 That the Executive Head of Human Resources be given delegated authority to take any further action necessary to give effect to the contents of this report and these recommendations

Report prepared by: Terry Baldwin, Group Head of Human Resources

Data Quality

Data sources:

Good

Data checked by:

Terry Baldwin Group Head of HR

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	X

3	High	
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Background Papers

None

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

None