

REPORT TO	ON
COUNCIL	24 July 2019



TITLE	REPORT OF
Decision: Appointment of Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service and Interim Section 151 Officer	Interim Monitoring Officer

Is this report confidential?	No
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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The purpose of the report is to inform Council of an urgent decision that was made in relation to the appointment of the interim Chief Executive. This decision was also reported to the meeting of Cabinet on the 19th of June 2019. Authority is also now being sought to extend this interim appointment and appoint an Interim Section 151 Officer.

PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Council are asked to note the taking of the Urgent Decision.
3. Council are asked to approve that Mr Gary Hall should continue to act as the Council's Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service whilst our permanent Chief Executive continues to be absent from the office.
4. Council are asked to approve that Mrs Jane Blundell, who is currently the Council's Deputy S151 Officer, is appointed as Interim S151 Officer (Statutory Finance Officer) until this role is filled on a permanent basis.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

5. Due to the absence from the office of the permanent Chief Executive (on special leave) it was necessary to take urgent action to appoint someone – on an interim basis – to fulfil this role. It is necessary for this appointment to continue in the circumstances of the continuing absence from the office of our Chief Executive.
6. The Deputy Chief Executive (Resources and Shared Services Transformation) was the Council's S151 Officer and he left the employment of the Council on the 30th June 2019. He had been on a period of special leave before then. The Deputy Section 151 Officer has been fulfilling the role of the Section 151 officer for the period that the Deputy Chief Executive (Resources and Shared Services Transformation) has not been in the office. It is desirable to formalise that decision – hence the reason for the third recommendation to this report.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Excellence and Financial Sustainability	x
Health and Wellbeing	
Place	

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

People	
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PROPOSALS (e.g. RATIONALE, DETAIL, FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT)

Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service

8. On the 23rd of May 2019 our permanent Chief Executive commenced a period of special leave. It was therefore imperative to appoint someone to fulfil the statutory role of Head of Paid Service in her absence.
9. Accordingly (on the 23rd of May) an urgent decision was made – further to Standing Order 35 of the Council's procedure rules – to appoint Mr Gary Hall to fulfil this role on an interim basis. The last day for the period of this initial appointment is the 24th of July.
10. The Standing Order 35 decision was made by the Interim Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
11. The Standing Order 35 decision was also signed by Cllr David Howarth in his capacity as Chair of Scrutiny. Cllr Howarth signed this decision to confirm that he accepted that there were genuine exceptional circumstances which necessitated the use of our urgency procedures.
12. Given the continuing absence from the office of our Permanent Chief Executive it is necessary to appoint someone moving forward to fulfil the role of the Council's Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service. The proposal is that Gary Hall's appointment should continue whilst our permanent Chief Executive remains absent from the office. Gary Hall is Chief Executive of Chorley Borough Council. He has a good knowledge of the workings of this council. He will divide his time between the two councils.

Section 151 Officer

13. Since the Deputy Chief Executive (Resources and Shared Services Transformation) commenced a period of special leave in May, the statutory finance role has been covered by the Deputy S151 Officer on a short-term basis. Now the Deputy Chief Executive (Resources and Shared Services Transformation) has left the Council, it is proposed that the Deputy S151 Officer, Jane Blundell, is appointed as S151 Officer on an interim basis. Elsewhere on the agenda Members will see a report on Shared

Services. Ultimately the role of the Section 151 Officer will be dealt with as part of the Shared Services arrangements with Chorley Borough Council.

CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

14. The urgency of the situation required prompt action – hence the need for a Standing Order 35 decision. The Leader liaised with his Cabinet colleagues and the Chair of Scrutiny prior to appointing Gary Hall. Chorley Borough Council were also spoken to. The proposal is that this appointment should continue. Likewise there is a need for the Section 151 Officer position to be resolved (pending a permanent solution to this issue).

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

15. A council must have a Head of Paid Service. There is no option in this regard. Once it was known that our Permanent Chief Executive would not be around then we had to appoint an Interim Head of Paid Service.
16. By extension to the preceding paragraph, moving forward we must have someone who continues to fulfil this role - hence why Council's approval is sought to extend the appointment.
17. Likewise it is a legal requirement to have a s151 Officer. It is one of the main statutory officers of the council along with the Monitoring Officer and Head of Paid Service. The council cannot effectively conduct its business unless it has officers appointed to these roles.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. Please see the Statutory Finance Officer comments below.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

19. Please see the Monitoring Officer comments below.

AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

20. There are no Air Quality implications.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

21. Mr Gary Hall has been appointed Chief Executive on an interim basis. The proposal is that he will continue to be appointed on this basis. It is also proposed that Jane Blundell should act as the Council's Section 151 officer on an interim basis.

ICT/TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

22. No implications here.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

23. No implications here.

RISK MANAGEMENT

24. A failure to have a Head of Paid Service could result in legal challenge to the council. Likewise there is a need to formalise the arrangements for the Section 151 Officer.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

25. All relevant Equality implications need to be identified.

RELEVANT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS

26. Cabinet are asked to note this report.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

27. With regard to the Head of Paid Service, Chorley Council will recharge South Ribble Borough Council 50% of the actual salary costs for the duration of the appointment. The monthly cost for appointment is £5900. For the Interim S151 Officer appointment, an appropriate honorarium based on the additional duties and responsibilities of the role will be agreed with the Head of Paid Service.

28. These costs can be contained within existing budgets through vacancy management. Any subsequent reports on this matter will include an update on any financial implications.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

29. The Head of Paid Service is one of the three statutory officers of the council. We must have someone fulfilling this role to be legally compliant. Hence in the absence of our permanent Chief Executive it was paramount that we appointed someone on an interim basis. Such arrangements need to continue. Whilst we have been legally compliant with the Deputy Section 151 Officer fulfilling the Section 151 Officer role, nevertheless as such arrangements may go on for some months yet it is desirable to formally appoint the Deputy Section 151 Officer to the Section 151 Officer role on an interim basis.

There are no background papers to this report

There are no appendices to this report

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