

# REPORT TO COUNCIL

<b>Open</b>				
Lead Member: Cllr Alistair Beales Email:				
Lead Officer: Kate Blakemore E-mail:			Other Officers consulted: Appointments Board Executive Leadership Team	
Financial Implications NO	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications YES	Equality Impact Assessment req'd YES	Risk Management Implications NO

Date of Meeting: Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025

## TITLE: APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OF STAFF AND DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

### RECOMMENDED:

#### Summary

This report has been authored following a robust and extensive recruitment process led by the Appointments Board where the Board were able to make a recommendation to Full Council to appoint into the role of Chief of Staff and to move the current interim Deputy Chief Executive into a permanent position

In accordance with the statutory provisions for designations of Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer roles, these appointments must be ratified by Full Council. This report therefore outlines the Appointments Board recommendations following completion of a detailed recruitment process.

#### Recommendation

##### Council Resolves:

1. That the postholder of Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer be confirmed as Emma Hodds, to commence on the date agreed between the postholder and the Chief Executive.
2. With immediate effect, that the post of interim Deputy Chief Executive (including Section 151 Officer) be confirmed as permanent and for Michelle Drewery to continue in this role

#### Reason for Decision

To appoint officers into the designated statutory roles required by section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Monitoring Officer) and section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 (section 151 officer).

## **1. Background**

1.1 Our current Assistant Director for legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer resigned earlier in the year. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 Cabinet therefore resolved to:

- Approve the formalisation of the Chief of Staff/Monitoring Officer role at the Executive Team level.
- Approve the parallel recruitment for both the Chief of Staff/Monitoring Officer and Chief Operating Officer positions confirming both these posts are necessary organisational appointments.
- Note that oversight of the recruitment processes will be undertaken by the Appointments Board, with final appointment recommendations submitted to Full Council in due course.

## **2. Interview Process**

2.1 All longlisted Candidates attended a full Day's Assessment Centre which included a technical interview and stakeholder panel assessment. Psychometric tests were also undertaken.

2.2 The Appointment Board subsequently met on 7<sup>th</sup> November to interview candidates who had been shortlisted to progress to the final interview stage of the selection process. They also met with the interim Deputy Chief Executive to review her achievements over the last six months to consider whether to recommend to Full Council the making of her post as permanent.

2.3 As a result the Appointments Board recommends to Council

- That the postholder of Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer be confirmed as Emma Hodds
- That the post of Interim Deputy Chief Executive (including Section 151 Officer) be confirmed as permanent and for Michelle Drewery to continue in this role.

2.4 Unfortunately the Appointments Board were unable to offer the position of Chief Operating Officer to a suitable candidate but have agreed to commencing a further recruitment process in relation to this role.

## **3. Policy Implications**

3.1 None

## **4. Financial Implications**

4.1 Both posts will be funded from existing budgets.

## **5. Personnel Implications**

- 5.1 Council are asked to note that a provisional job offer has been made to the recommended candidate for Chief of Staff, subject to full Council ratification, satisfactory references and a completed medical assessment, as is standard practice for all Council appointments.
- 5.2 Whilst the recommended candidate will be subject to a three month notice period with their current employer, we are currently negotiating a slightly earlier start date, potentially as we move into the New Year.

## **6. Environmental Considerations**

- 6.1 None

## **7. Statutory Considerations**

- 7.1 Monitoring Officer: It is the role of the Monitoring Officer to report on matters they believe to be illegal or amount to maladministration, to be responsible for matters relating to the conduct of councillors and officers and to be responsible for the operation of the council's constitution. Local Government and Housing Act 1989. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/42/section/5>
- 7.2 Section 151 Officer: Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and appoint a S151 Officer, also known as a Chief Financial Officer (CFO), to have responsibility for those arrangements. As such, the CFO must lead on a local authority's financial functions and ensure they are fit for purpose. CFOs must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced.
- 7.3 In correspondence with the Local Government Finance Act 1988 the CFO must be a member of one of the following bodies in order to qualify as a responsible officer: (a) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, (b) the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland, (c) the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants, (d) the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, (e) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland, (f) the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, and (g) any other body of accountants established in the United Kingdom and for the time being approved by the Secretary of State for the purposes of this section.

Local Government Act 1972

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/151>

Local Government Finance Act 1988

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/41/section/113>

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1 Attached