

# BROMSGROVE DISTRICT AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCILS

**Joint Appointment Committee** 8<sup>th</sup> January  
2025

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## NOMINATIONS FOR THE POSITIONS OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE AND THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

Relevant Portfolio Holders	Councillors Joe Baker, Leader of Redditch Borough Council and Karen May, Leader of Bromsgrove District Council
Portfolio Holders Consulted	
Relevant Lead Officer	Becky Talbot Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager
Report Author Becky Talbot	Job Title: Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager Contact email: <a href="mailto:becky.talbot@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">becky.talbot@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a> Contact Tel: 01527 64252 Ext: 3385
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priorities	Sustainability
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

### 1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Joint Appointments Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** to each Council

- 1) To note that the Joint Appointments Sub-Committee has completed a rigorous selection process to recruit a new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and a new Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer.
- 2) The appointment of John Leach as the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service. The commencement date will be as soon as possible, subject to notice period.
- 3) The appointment of Robert Watson as Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer. The commencement date will be as soon as possible, subject to notice period.

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- 4) **To note that the salary agreed for the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service is within the range approved by Redditch Borough Council's Pay Policy as the employing authority.**
- 5) **To note that the salary agreed for the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer is within the range approved by Bromsgrove District Council's Pay Policy as the employing authority.**

## 2. **BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Joint Appointments Sub-Committee undertook the final interviews for the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) roles on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024 respectively. The Sub-Committee received professional support from the authorities' current Chief Executive, the Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager and an external Recruitment Advisor from GatenbySanderson.

2.2 The members of the Joint Appointments Sub-Committee were:-

Bromsgrove District Council Representatives:

Councillor Karen May, Leader, Bromsgrove District Council  
Councillor Peter McDonald, Labour Group Leader, Bromsgrove District Council  
Councillor Rob Hunter, Liberal Democrat Group Leader, Bromsgrove District Council

Redditch Borough Council:

Councillor Joe Baker, Leader, Redditch Borough Council  
Councillor Bill Hartnett, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Redditch Borough Council  
Councillor Matthew Dormer, Conservative Group Leader, Redditch Borough Council

2.3 The Sub-Committee voted unanimously and is recommending John Leach for the role of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, subject to satisfactory references and eligibility checks.

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- 2.4 The Sub-Committee voted unanimously and is recommending Robert Watson for the role of Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, subject to satisfactory references and eligibility checks.
- 2.5 John Leach is currently employed by East Lindsey District Council, on a permanent basis as Deputy Chief Executive for East Lindsey District Council, South Holland District Council and Boston Borough Council (South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership). Subject to Members' agreement at both Councils, he will undertake the role of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service. Commencement date will be as soon as possible, subject to notice period.
- 2.6 The Joint Appointments Sub-Committee propose that the salary to be offered for this role is £145,807 in accordance with the pay range set out in Redditch Borough Council Council's Pay Policy Statement, as the employing authority for this position, subject to approval by both Councils.
- 2.7 Robert Watson is currently employed by Surrey Heath Borough Council on a permanent basis as Strategic Director, Finance, S151 and Customer Services. Subject to Members' approval at both Councils, he will undertake the role of Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer. Commencement date will be as soon as possible, subject to notice period.
- 2.8 The Joint Appointments Sub-Committee propose the salary to be offered for this role is £119,560 in accordance with the pay range set out in Bromsgrove District Council's Pay Policy Statement, as employing authority, subject to approval by both Councils.
- 2.9 Both appointments are to be put forward for formal approval by Full Council. The Council meetings are due to take place on the following dates:

Bromsgrove District Council - 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025  
Redditch Borough Council - 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025

### **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 The positions of Head of Paid Service and Section 151 Officer are statutory officer posts. It is therefore imperative that the Councils have Officers who are appointed to these positions.

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- 3.2 Redditch Borough Council is the employing authority for the position of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service. Subject to Members' approval at Council of John Leach's appointment, he will be made available by Redditch Borough Council under the shared services arrangements to perform such duties as are required by their post for Bromsgrove District Council.
- 3.3 Bromsgrove District Council is the employing authority for the position of Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer. Subject to Members' approval at Council of Robert Watson's appointment, Robert Watson will be made available by Bromsgrove District Council under the shared services arrangements to perform such duties as are required by their post for Redditch Borough Council.
- 3.4 Subject to Members' approval at both Councils of the appointment of John Leach, the current Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service will remain in post until John Leach has commenced employment with Redditch Borough Council.
- 3.5 Subject to Members' approval at both Councils of the appointment of Robert Watson, the current Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer will remain in post until Robert Watson has commenced employment with Bromsgrove District Council. This will ensure service continuity and that both Councils continue to have statutory officers in post.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The salary costs of the new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service as well as the new Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer will be met from existing budgets and is within the Pay Policies of the respective Councils.
- 4.2 It should be noted that the salary costs will be shared on a 50:50 ratio between the two authorities.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 It is a legal requirement that the appointments of the Head of Paid Service and the Section 151 Officer respectively, as "statutory officers", are made by full Council. This is set out in the relevant regulations (The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) Regulations 2001(as amended) Schedule I Part II) which are reproduced in the Officer Employment Rules of both Council's Constitutions.

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- 5.2 The Council is required to nominate an officer under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to be responsible for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The relevant wording states that: - "Without prejudice to section 111 above, 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."
- 5.3 Section 6 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, further sets out that " (1) On and after the commencement day the Common Council shall – (a) make arrangements for the proper administration of such of its financial affairs as relate to it in its capacity as a local authority, police authority, or port health authority, and (b) secure that one of its officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs".
- 5.4 Section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires that the officer appointed as the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) must be a member of a specified accountancy body.
- 5.5 The Councils are required by the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to appoint an officer as the Councils' Head of Paid Service.
- 5.6 There is a requirement under the Officer Employment Procedure rules in both Councils' constitutions, to ensure that the Leaders and any other Cabinet / Executive Committee members are notified and have no objections to the offer of appointment. This must occur before an offer of appointment is made. In this instance, Cabinet / Executive Committee Members will be contacted after the Joint Appointments Committee, subject to recommendations being made about appointments to the positions of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer.

## 6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

### Relevant Priorities for the Councils

- 6.1 The appointment of a Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service as well as a Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer will ensure there is stability and continuity at both authorities.
- 6.2 Effective financial management underpins all the Councils' operations and the achievement of both Councils' priorities.

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## **Climate Change Implications**

- 6.3 There are no specific climate change implications.

## **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.4 There are no direct equalities or diversity implications.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Failure to agree appointments to the positions of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer would mean that both Councils would be at risk of failing to comply with the requirement to have officers in these statutory posts should the current officers in these positions give notice.

## **8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **Background Papers**

Overarching Framework Agreement between Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council - 21<sup>st</sup> March 2011