



Doncaster Council

**To the Chair and Members of the
COUNCIL**

TEMPORARY DESIGNATED SECTION 151 OFFICER

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of Council for Debbie Hogg, Director of Corporate Resources to be Doncaster Council's designated Section 151 Officer with effect from 1 November 2019 or the date of commencement of maternity leave of the substantive potholder if this is earlier. This will be for a temporary period until the substantive post holder returns to work following maternity leave.

RECOMMENDATION

2. It is recommended that Debbie Hogg be temporarily designated as Doncaster Council's Section 151 Officer with effect from 1 November 2019, or the date of commencement of maternity leave if this is earlier.
3. It is recommended that the Monitoring Officer update the Constitution where necessary to reflect the temporary change to officer designation outlined in this report.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. The impact of the post holder on the citizens of Doncaster is to ensure the council meets its statutory responsibilities in respect of the administration of the Council's financial affairs acting as the Council's Section 151 Officer.

BACKGROUND

5. The role of Section 151 Officer is currently held by the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Director Finance. The substantive post holder will be commencing a period of maternity leave from November and is entitled to a period of up to 52 weeks maternity leave, although the temporary arrangements will be reviewed after 6 months.
6. Despite working closely with Reed Specialist Recruitment – the Council's managed service provider, the recruitment of a suitably qualified and experienced person and within the salary banding to undertake the role during this temporary period has been unsuccessful.

7. In order to ensure the Council has continuity at the point the substantive post holder commences her maternity leave and have a designated Section 151 Officer in place, it is proposed that Debbie Hogg, Director of Corporate Resources also undertakes this statutory role, until the post holder returns to work from maternity leave.
8. Debbie Hogg, as Director of Corporate Resources already has responsibility for the overall strategic planning and financial advisory role and will continue with this role supporting both the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) and the Mayor. Furthermore, she is an experienced Section 151 Officer and therefore holds the relevant qualifications required for the role.
9. Once approved the Council's Constitution should be reviewed and amended as appropriate to ensure the power to deal with financial matters that are the statutory responsibility of the Section 151 Officer, are accurately referred to in the Constitution.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

10. It is a statutory requirement to have a designated Section S151 Officer. Following attempts at recruiting a suitably qualified and experienced individual on a temporary basis proved unsuccessful, the only option considered appropriate is to designate the Director of Corporate Resources to undertake this statutory role.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY PRIORITIES

11.

| | Outcomes | Implications |
|--|---|--------------|
| | <p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment | |
| | <p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage | |
| | <p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for</p> | |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | <p>learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work | |
| | <p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes | |
| | <p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance | <p>This is a key statutory role within the Council's Management Structure and will be expected to make a significant contribution to the delivery of these priorities</p> |

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

12. This is a statutory role and therefore the Council must designate an officer to carry out this role to ensure the council meets its legal responsibilities as well as ensuring stability and effective leadership. There are no other risks associated with this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (HW 13.08.19)

13. Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires every local authority to 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.
14. Chief Financial Officer is defined by Section 6 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as the officer having responsibility for the purposes of

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the administration of the authority's financial affairs.

15. Section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 imposes professional qualification requirements for officers having responsibility under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the administration of an authority's financial affairs.
16. The proposed changes to officer designations and duties outlined in this report will require a number of minor technical changes to be made to various parts of the Constitution. These revisions may be made by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the authority to "make minor amendments" as set out in Article 1 of the Constitution.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (AT 13.08.19)

17. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (JP 12.08.19)

18. There are no specific human resources implications other than those mentioned elsewhere in this report.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS (JP 12.08.19)

19. There are no specific equality implications arising from this report.

CONSULTATION

20. Consultation has been undertaken with all relevant post holders, the Mayor and Members of the Chief Officers Appointments Committee.

This report has significant implications in terms of the following:

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|-------------------------------|---|------------------------------|--|
| Procurement | | Crime & Disorder | |
| Human Resources | X | Human Rights & Equalities | |
| Buildings, Land and Occupiers | | Environment & Sustainability | |
| ICT | | Capital Programme | |

BACKGROUND PAPERS

21. None

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