

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Annual Council **DATE:** 20th May 2021
CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive
01753 875017
WARDS: All

PART I **FOR DECISION**

APPOINTMENT TO STATUTORY ROLE OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE (S151 OFFICER)

1 Purpose of Report

To approve the appointment of Steven Mair as the Council's s151 Officer.

2 Recommendation

The Council is requested to approve the appointment of Steven Mair as the Council's S151 Officer.

3 Background

- 3.1 Neil Wilcox was appointed as the Council's s151 Officer with effect from 2nd October 2017, and as Executive Director of Corporate Operations last year as part of the Our Futures project. Mr Wilcox has resigned from the Council, and his last day of service was 14th May 2021.
- 3.2 In order to review, improve and transform various aspects of the Council's finances and linked to the capitalisation directive that MHCLG are minded to approve and the outcome of the external auditors work on the 2018/19 accounts and likely recommendations arising from that, the Council recruited Steven Mair to provide support.
- 3.3 Mr Mair is a highly experienced S151 officer of 9 years standing with 13 years as Group Director/Assistant Director of Finance having previously been Treasurer of Westminster City Council and prior to that Treasurer of Oldham Borough Council, He has also worked for the Government of Jersey and various other major local authorities in financial and management roles. He is a qualified account (CIPFA), has an honours degree and a Masters in Business Administration and has considerable experience of radically transforming local authority finances and financial teams

4 Legal & Constitutional Context

- 4.1 The Local Government Act 1972 requires the Authority to designate an officer as its Section 151 Officer/Chief Finance Officer. The Section 151 Officer, along with the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer are responsible for ensuring lawfulness, fairness, probity and general good governance that support the Council in achieving its aims, and the 3 Statutory Governance Officers are expected to work closely together.
- 4.2 In accordance with the Local Authorities Standing Orders Regulations 2001, matters relating to the appointment of a s151 Officer are reserved to Full Council.
- 4.3 The Council's Constitution sets out the main duties of the Section 151 Officer as: ensuring the lawfulness and financial prudence of decision making; administration of financial affairs; contribution to corporate management; and providing advice and financial information.
- 4.4 The Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires that the post holder be a member of a specified accountancy body.
- 4.5 The Chief Executive, as the Head of the Paid Service, has a duty under section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to determine the staffing arrangements necessary to deliver the Council's functions.

5. Conclusion

The Council is required to have a s151 Officer, and Slough is fortunate that Mr Mair is already working for the Council and so can take up the responsibilities of the statutory role immediately upon appointment by Council.

Mr Mair and the Associate Director for Business Services will report to the Chief Executive, pending recruitment to the vacant post of Executive Director of Corporate Operations.

6 Background Papers:

None.