

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Council      **DATE:** 22 July 2021  
**CONTACT OFFICER:** Surjit Nagra, Associate Director Customer  
**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR DECISION**

#### **APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER**

1. **Purpose of Report**

This report seeks agreement for the appointment of the Council's Monitoring Officer.

2. **Recommendation**

Council is requested to appoint Angela Wakefield as the Council's Monitoring Officer with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021.

3. **Background**

The Monitoring Officer, along with the Head of Paid Service and the Section 151 Officer combine to form the Council's Statutory Officer functions. These roles are key to ensuring lawfulness, fairness, probity and general good governance that supports the Council in achieving its aims. It is important that they work effectively together yet maintain appropriate independence and that the roles are undertaken by adequately skilled and experienced staff supported by appropriate resources.

The Council's Monitoring Officer has a number of functions which are defined within the Council's Constitution. These include ensuring lawfulness and fairness of decision making, supporting the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee, receiving reports, conducting investigations, ensuring access to information, advising whether executive decisions are within the budget and policy framework and maintaining the Constitution.

#### **Slough Monitoring Officer**

The current interim postholder has undertaken the duties of Monitoring Officer since January 2018 on a part time basis in the expectation that a full-time post holder would be identified.

When it became clear that the post would not be filled internally as part of the Our Futures Programme, external recruitment was initiated, and the shortlisted candidate met with the Appointment Sub Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The Sub Committee unanimously agreed to recommend Angela's appointment to full Council, subject to satisfactory references being received. No well-founded objection to the appointment has been received from any member of the Executive.

The proposed appointee is currently a Solicitor and the Monitoring Officer at East Staffordshire Borough Council, having undertaken the role for over 6 years, and is on 2 months' notice.

If Council agrees the appointment, there will be a comprehensive induction programme lead by the current interim postholder. In addition, the new Monitoring Officer will have access to appropriate support and resources both internally and from HB Public Law to discharge her responsibilities.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

The cost of this appointment will be contained within the Directorate budget.

#### **5. Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

The appointment of a Monitoring Officer is a statutory requirement under Section 5, Local Government & Housing Act 1989. The Council has the right to designate and appoint the Monitoring Officer and to give three months notice to the Monitoring Officer if it wishes to redesignate the post.

#### **6. Conclusion**

The role of the Monitoring Officer is an important element in the Council's structure. Given the focus on governance arising from reports elsewhere on this agenda, the appointment of a full time Monitoring Officer tasked with championing good governance brings welcome capacity to address the challenges ahead.