



## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCILS

### MEETING OF THE JOINT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 14TH JANUARY, 2026, AT 6.00 PM

PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE  
MARKET STREET, BROMSGROVE B61 8DA

MEMBERS: Councillors K.J. May (Co-Chair), S. Harvey (Co-Chair), R. Bailes, J. Baker, W. Hartnett, R. J. Hunter, W. King, P. M. McDonald, J. Spilsbury and P. J. Whittaker

### AGENDA

#### **1. Nomination of Chair for the meeting**

Members are asked to note that under the terms of reference for the Joint Appointments Committee the Leaders of Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council should take it in turns to Chair meetings of the Committee.

#### **2. Apologies for Absence**

#### **3. Declarations of Interest**

#### **4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 3 - 6)**

#### **5. To consider any urgent business, details of which have been notified to the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting**

**6. Exclusion of the Press and Public - To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of item(s) of business containing exempt information:-**

Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, during the course of the meeting to consider excluding the public from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, it may be necessary to move the following resolution:

“That, under S.100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) – Items 7 - Arrangements for the Appointment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for the Councils - and 8 – Current Section 151 Arrangements – Verbal Update - on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act”.

These paragraphs are as follows:

Subject to the “public interest” test, information relating to:

- Para 3 – financial or business affairs; and
- Para 4 – labour relations matters.

and may need to be considered as ‘exempt’.

**7. Arrangements for the Appointment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for the Councils (Pages 7 - 20)**

**8. Current Section 151 Arrangements - Verbal Update**

J Leach  
Chief Executive

6<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCILS****MEETING OF THE JOINT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE****WEDNESDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 2025, AT 5.30 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors S. Harvey (Chairman), K.J. May, R. Bailes, W. Hartnett, R. J. Hunter, W. King, P. M. McDonald, J. Spilsbury and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillor M. Dormer (on Teams)

Officers: Mrs. C. Felton, Mr J. Leach and Mrs. B. Talbot and Mrs. J Gresham

1/25

**NOMINATION OF A CHAIR FOR THE MEETING**

A nomination was received for Councillor S. Harvey to be appointed as the Chair for the meeting. The nomination was proposed by Councillor K. May and seconded by Councillor W. Hartnett.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor S. Harvey be appointed to Chair the meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee.

2/25

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members were advised that an apology for absence had been received from Councillor J. Baker.

3/25

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

4/25

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Joint Appointments Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025 were submitted for Members' consideration.

**RESOLVED** that

the minutes of the Joint Appointments Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025 be approved as a true and correct record.

5/25

**TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIR, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING**

There was no Urgent Business on this occasion.

6/25

**ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A SECTION 151 OFFICER FOR THE COUNCILS**

The Chief Executive presented the report on the Arrangements for the Appointment of a Section 151 Officer for the Councils, for Members' consideration. In doing so, it was explained that the report set out the options for the recruitment to the Section 151 Officer position following the departure of the previous Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer. It was noted that as this was a statutory position the role was currently being undertaken by the Assistant Director for Finance and Customer Services on a temporary basis. This had been agreed through the Urgent Decision process at both Councils in October 2025. Members were informed that the Assistant Director for Finance and Customer Services role was employed by Redditch Borough Council and there had been the need for Redditch Borough Council to agree to make the current post holder available to Bromsgrove District Council under the shared services arrangements, in order to perform such duties as were required by the post at Bromsgrove District Council.

Contained within the report were three options which Members were being asked to consider and subsequently decide the preferred approach going forward. It was suggested that Option A (which included a long recruitment process and establishment of a Joint Appointments Committee along with associated reports to both Councils) would take a significant amount of time and it would be necessary to appoint to the role as quickly as possible due to the upcoming Budget setting process at both Councils.

Option B proposed that authority be delegated solely to the Chief Executive to recruit to the position. Members expressed that this option, although the most expedient, would not allow Members to have involvement in the process and meet any potential candidates prior to an appointment being made.

Option C, which proposed a long-term arrangement with another Local Authority for their Section 151 Officer to be appointed as the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils for the lifetime of the authorities was discussed. It was reported that although this had been a potential option at the time of writing the report, subsequent discussions with another Local Authority had not been positive and this option would not be viable going forward.

During discussions regarding the financial implications of the role, it was noted that this position would only be responsible for the Finance area of the previous role and did not include the Deputy Chief Executive responsibilities. This would enable the appointee to concentrate solely on the finance area during an extremely busy time for the Finance team as the Budget setting period approached. The job description had been assessed by West Midlands Employers, and the salary had been evaluated between £114,282 and £118,694. There would be further costs involved, if the role was appointed through an agency, with a one-off payment required of twenty percent.

Members were keen to understand the length of an appointment for the temporary position. It was reported that initially this would be for six months, however it could be that due to the current situation of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) there would be the possibility for this to be extended.

Members requested assurance that due diligence would be carried out by the Council and recruitment agency in order to appoint a candidate. Officers explained that this would be carried out during the recruitment process.

Following the discussions, Members expressed that Option B would be the most appropriate proposal going forward. However, it was requested that Members be involved in the process and a Joint Appointments Panel be established to ensure that Members had an opportunity to meet with candidates prior to any appointment being made. This was felt to be an acceptable way forward; however it was noted that the process needed to be undertaken quickly, and Members must make themselves available to meet the candidates following a shortlisting process undertaken by the Chief Executive of the Councils. Any meeting of the Joint Appointments Panel would need to take place prior to Christmas in order to ensure that a candidate be appointed as soon as possible. It was suggested that there be a panel of eight members in total (four from each Council), and that the quorum be four (which must include at least one Councillor from each authority and at least one Leader).

On being put to the vote Members

**RESOLVED**

- 1) to note the current acting Section 151 Officer support in place at Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Councils;
- 2) to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to shortlist candidates for the position of interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for a period of six months with an option to extend as necessary, subject to Council approval of the successful candidate;
- 3) to establish a Joint Appointments Panel to consider the shortlisted candidates prior to the approval of the successful candidate at Council;
- 4) to agree the following nominations to the Joint Appointments Panel for the interim appointment of the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer:

**Bromsgrove District Council: Councillors K. May (Leader), R. Bailes, R. Hunter and P. McDonald. (4)**

**Redditch Borough Council: Councillors S. Harvey (Leader), J. Baker, W. Hartnett and J. Spilsbury. (4)**

- 5) to agree that the quorum for meetings of the Joint Appointments Panel for the recruitment of the interim appointment of the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer should be four Members, which must include at least one Councillor from each authority and at least one Leader.

The meeting closed at 6.00 p.m.

Chairman

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**14<sup>th</sup> January**

**Arrangements for the Appointment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for the Councils**

Relevant Lead Councillors	Councillor Karen May, Leader of Bromsgrove District Council and Councillor Sharon Harvey, Leader of Redditch Borough Council
Lead Councillors Consulted	
Relevant Assistant Director	Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
Report Author Claire Felton	Job Title: Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services Contact email: <a href="mailto:c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">c.felton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a>
Wards Affected	All wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	Not applicable
Relevant Council Priority	
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Joint Appointments Committee is asked to RESOLVE that**

- 1) To NOTE the report from Penna recruitment consultants, at Appendix 1.
- 2) A recruitment campaign commence prioritising a permanent appointment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer as the preferred outcome, while remaining open-minded to interim or fixed term candidates should exceptional individuals emerge during the process.
- 3) Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive and the Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services, following consultation with the Leaders of Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils, to determine the most appropriate course of action for the

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**recruitment process, as detailed in resolution 2 above, based on the outcome of the campaign.**

- 4) to establish a Joint Appointments Panel to consider the shortlisted candidates prior to the approval of the successful candidate at Council;**
- 5) to agree nominations to the Joint Appointments Panel for the appointment of the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer.**
- 6) to agree that the quorum for meetings of the Joint Appointments Panel for the recruitment of the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer should be four Members, which must include at least one Councillor from each authority and at least one Leader.**

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Following the departure of the Councils' Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, the authorities have temporary arrangements in place in respect of the statutory officer element of this post.
- 2.2 The Joint Appointments Committee previously considered this situation in November 2025 and proposed a way forward.
- 2.3 This report invites the Joint Appointments Committee to consider an update on the current situation and to determine the next steps for the appointment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for the Councils.
- 2.4 Members are also invited to consider an update from external recruitment consultants, Penna. Penna has provided an update on the current market for Section 151 Officers. The report from Penna also provides Members with an overview of the relative cost benefit analysis of a permanent appointment compared with an interim appointment of a Section 151 Officer. This report can be viewed at Appendix 1.

## **3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

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- 3.1 The position of Section 151 Officer is a statutory officer post for local authorities.
- 3.2 The previous Section 151 Officer was employed by Bromsgrove District Council and made available to Redditch Borough Council under shared services arrangements to perform such duties as were required by the post at Redditch Borough Council.
- 3.3 The previous post holder departed from the organisations in October 2025.
- 3.4 To ensure compliance with statutory requirements to have a Section 151 Officer, both authorities agreed, through urgent decisions, taken on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025 in Redditch and on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025 in Bromsgrove, to appoint the Councils' Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services as their acting Section 151 Officer. As the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services is employed by Redditch Borough Council, there was a need for Redditch Borough Council to agree to make her available to Bromsgrove District Council under shared services arrangements to perform such duties as were required by the post at Bromsgrove District Council.
- 3.5 There was a requirement for urgent decisions to be taken in respect of this matter because the previous Section 151 Officer left the organisations at the end of October 2025 and there were no Council meetings due to take place at either authority prior to the expiration of his contract.
- 3.6 The Joint Appointments Committee held a meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025 to consider options for the appointment of a new Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer. At that meeting, Members agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to shortlist candidates for the position for a temporary period of six months. Members also agreed to establish a Joint Appointments Panel to consider the shortlisted candidates prior to the appointment of successful candidate.
- 3.7 Following that meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee initial arrangements were made in line with the position that had been agreed by Members. However, it was unfortunately not possible to progress with the recruitment process of a temporary basis as originally envisaged.
- 3.8 Consequently, the Joint Appointments Committee is now being asked to consider launching a recruitment campaign to appoint a Director of

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Finance and Section 151 Officer for the two Councils to serve on a permanent, full-time basis as a preferred way forward, whilst remaining open-minded to interim or fixed term candidates should exceptional individuals emerge during the process. To secure a strong and credible field of candidates and to maximise the likelihood of making a successful and sustainable appointment, it is recommended that a targeted search commence. Further detail relating to this recruitment process is available at Appendix 1 to the report.

- 3.9 The above balanced and flexible approach provides the best opportunity to attract a credible and competitive field of candidates in the current market.
- 3.10 Members will note that this report deals exclusively with the appointment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer and that this is a departure from the post currently sitting on the staffing establishment. This report seeks to disaggregate the current post and in doing so creates a new post of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer as it is felt that this would result in a more resilient and focussed approach moving forward.
- 3.11 Members are asked to note that this approach will result in the role of Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources needing to be considered as part of a wider Senior Leadership review.
- 3.12 Members are asked to note that any final decision in respect of the appointment of a permanent Section 151 Officer would need to be referred to full Council at both authorities for approval.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Section 151 Officer is the Councils' Chief Finance Officer and is responsible for the proper administration of the authorities' financial affairs.
- 4.2 The post of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer has been evaluated by West Midlands Employers to be £114,282 – £118,694. It is anticipated that this will result in these proposals being financed through existing resources, however, the interim contingency arrangements may result in additional expenditure which would require the approval of Council.

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4.3 There may be future redundancy implications due to for example Local Government Reorganisation. It is however, not possible to calculate the costs given each potential candidate's circumstances will be different.

## **5. Legal Implications**

5.1 Councils are 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."

5.2 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.

5.3 It is a legal requirement that the appointment of the Section 151 Officer, as a statutory officer, is 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 in both authorities' Constitutions.

5.4 Section 113 the Local Government Act 1972 permits Councils to enter an agreement to place the services of their staff at the disposal of other local authorities. This legislative power currently applies to the temporary arrangements whereby Redditch Borough Council is making the Assistant Director of Finance and Customer Services available to Bromsgrove District Council to serve as their acting Section 151 Officer. The arrangement would also apply in future to Bromsgrove District Council, as the employing authority of the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer post, making the officer available to Redditch Borough Council.

## **6. Other - Implications**

### Local Government Reorganisation

6.1 This report has been prepared for the Joint Appointments Committee's consideration in a context of ongoing Local Government

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Reorganisation. Under the Government's proposals to reorganise local government in two-tier authority areas, both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils are due to cease to exist from May 2028 onwards. There is the potential that this situation could deter some candidates from applying for the position of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer with the Councils (see also section 4.3).

## Relevant Council Priority

6.2 The proposals detailed in this report are designed to support the following Council priorities:

Bromsgrove – Financial stability and sustainability.

Redditch – Financial stability, organisational stability and supported governance.

## Climate Change Implications

6.3 There are no specific climate change implications.

## Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.4 No specific equalities and diversity implications have been identified.

## 7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 There is a risk that potential appropriate candidates for the position of Section 151 Officer for the Councils may be deterred from applying for the position in a context of Local Government Reorganisation.

7.2 As the position of Section 151 Officer is a statutory officer post, the Councils must ensure that an appropriately qualified individual is appointed at all times, including on a temporary basis where necessary. Failure to do so would place the Council at risk of reputational damage, would undermine corporate governance arrangements and would result in non-compliance with legal requirements.

7.3 There is a risk that, should the Council take significant time to recruit a Section 151 Officer, this could create a stressful environment for the Council's Financial Services team.

## 8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendices

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Appendix 1 – Exempt Information

Background papers

Bromsgrove District Council – Urgent Decision (taken 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025): [Bromsgrove Urgent Decision - Section 151 Officer](#)

Redditch Borough Council – Urgent Decision (taken 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025): [Redditch Urgent Decision - Section 151 Officer](#)

Joint Appointments Committee Report, (considered on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025):

Bromsgrove District Council website: [Report to the Joint Appointments Committee - 12th November 2025](#)

Redditch Borough Council website: [Report to the Joint Appointments Committee - 12th November 2025](#)

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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