

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE JOINT APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 14TH JANUARY 2026, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Co-Chair), S. Harvey (Co-Chair), R. Bailes, W. Hartnett, P. M. McDonald and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillor M. Dormer (on Teams)
Mr. A. Tromans, Partner for CIPFA Penna

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

7/25 **NOMINATION OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING**

A nomination was received that Councillor K. May be appointed as the Chair for this meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee. The nomination was proposed by Councillor S. Harvey and seconded by Councillor P. Whittaker.

RESOLVED that Councillor K. May be appointed to Chair the meeting of the Joint Appointments Committee.

8/25 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Baker, R. Hunter, W. King and J. Spilsbury.

9/25 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

10/25 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Joint Appointments Committee meeting held on 12th November 2025 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the Joint Appointments Committee meeting held on 12th November 2025 be approved as a true and correct record.

11/25

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.

12/25

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER FOR THE COUNCILS

The Chief Executive presented the Arrangements for the Appointment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for the Councils for Members' consideration.

In doing so, it was noted that the former Section 151 Officer had departed from Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils in 2025. The Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services had been acting in an interim capacity since October 2025. Following consideration of the situation in November 2025 it had been deemed necessary to revisit the appointment of an Interim Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer. It had been agreed that the recruitment process would be progressed using Penna Consultants, who had a significant experience in the recruitment of Senior Finance Officers within Local Government. Members were reminded that the final decision on the appointment would be considered and agreed at full Council.

Mr. A. Tromans, Partner for Penna Consultants provided Members with an overview of the current market for Local Government recruitment, including supply and demand of suitable candidates and willingness of candidates to make the step up to Director level. It was noted that this was a good opportunity for a candidate to take a step up in their career. It was hoped that the role would appeal to a wide range of candidates including those who were working within a single authority who wanted to experience greater responsibility within a shared service setting or those who were currently in a Deputy Section 151 Officer role.

It was proposed that the preferred option for a suitable candidate would be a permanent position. This would enable resilience within the Finance team at both Councils and provide continuity at a time of significant change within the structure of Local Government due to the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). However, it was confirmed

that a six-month or an interim appointment would not be excluded if appropriate.

In terms of the role, the job description had been evaluated and a competitive salary applied accordingly.

Members were keen that a suitable candidate be appointed by the end of the process to ensure that the Councils were in a good position going forward at a time of uncertainty and significant change. It was confirmed that there would be assessments and interviews carried out as part of the recruitment process in order to identify the right candidate for the role. It was highlighted that an understanding of a complex political landscape would also be required along with the understanding of working under a shared service arrangement.

In terms of notice it was expected that a successful candidate would need to provide at least three months' notice. Therefore, taking the time it took to identify a suitable candidate, interviews and Member Panel and consideration of Full Council, it was hoped that the successful candidate would be in post by June or July 2026.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The report from Penna recruitment consultants be noted.**
- 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 recruitment process, as detailed in resolution 2 above, based on the outcome of the campaign.**
- 4) A Joint Appointments Panel be established to consider the shortlisted candidates prior to the approval of the successful candidate at Council.**

- 5) to agree the following nominations to the Joint Appointments Panel for the appointment of the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer.**

Bromsgrove District Council: Councillors K. May (Leader), R. Bailes, and P. McDonald. (3)

Redditch Borough Council: Councillors S. Harvey (Leader), W. Hartnett and J. Spilsbury. (3)

- 6) 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.**

[During consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed that included information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). However, there is no exempt information contained within the record of this minute].

13/25

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:-

RESOLVED that:

Under S100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 of the said act, as amended.

- Minute Item No 14 - Current Section 151 Arrangements - Verbal Update

CURRENT SECTION 151 ARRANGEMENTS - VERBAL UPDATE

The Chief Executive provided an update on the current Section 151 Officer arrangements. In doing so it was reported that the Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services had been acting in an interim capacity since October 2025. However, it had been necessary to revisit this arrangement due to the impact of the increased workload at an extremely busy budget setting period for the Councils.

As a result, a temporary solution had been considered and a suitable fixed term candidate identified. Members were informed that Ms. J. Lorraine would commence work with the Councils on 19th January 2026 on a temporary basis.

Ms. Lorraine was an extremely experienced and Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) qualified Section 151 Officer with significant Local Government experience.

Ms. Lorraine would work in a hybrid manner, in line with Council policy, however, would be in attendance at key Council meetings over the coming months. The funding of this appointment would be met from Council Reserves with each Council responsible for fifty per cent of the costs.

RESOLVED that the current Section 151 arrangements - verbal update be noted.

[During consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed that included information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The meeting closed at 6.40 p.m.

Chairman