

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCILS

Joint Appointment Committee 17th March
2026

NOMINATIONS FOR THE POSITIONS OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE 151 OFFICER

Relevant Portfolio Holders	Councillors Sharon Harvey, Leader of Redditch Borough Council and Karen May, Leader of Bromsgrove District Council
Portfolio Holders Consulted	
Relevant Lead Officer	Becky Talbot Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager
Report Author Becky Talbot	Job Title: Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager Contact email: becky.talbot@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 64252 Ext: 3385
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priorities	Sustainability
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Appointments Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** to each Council

- 1) To **NOTE** that the Joint Appointments Panel has completed a rigorous selection process to recruit a new Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer.
- 2) The appointment of James Walton as Director for Finance and Section 151 Officer (as an employee of Bromsgrove District Council). The commencement date will be as soon as possible, subject to references, medical and eligibility checks and his notice period.
- 3) To **NOTE** that the salary agreed for the Director of Finance Section 151 is within the range approved by Bromsgrove District Council's Pay Policy as the employing authority.

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2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Joint Appointments Panel undertook the final interviews for Director of Finance on 16th March 2026. The Panel received professional support from the authorities' Chief Executive, the Assistant Director of Legal Democratic and Procurement Services (Monitoring Officer) and an external Recruitment Advisor from Penna.

2.2 The members of the Joint Appointments Panel were:-

Bromsgrove District Council

Councillor Karen May, Leader
Councillor Peter McDonald
Councillor Rachael Bailes

Redditch Borough Council:

Councillor Sharon Harvey, Leader
Councillor Bill Hartnett
Councillor Jane Spilsbury

2.3 The Panel voted unanimously and is recommending James Walton for the role of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer, subject to satisfactory references and eligibility checks.

2.5 The Joint Appointments Panel noted that the salary range for this role is £114,282 – £118,694 in accordance with the pay range set out in Bromsgrove Districts Council's Pay Policy Statement, as the employing authority for this position, subject to approval by both Councils.

2.6 The appointment of statutory officers is a council function. Members have been cited on this process and agree that as there are not due to be any council meetings until the Annual Council meetings due to take place in May 2026, the proposed offer of the position of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council be made through the urgent decision process. This will ensure any potential disruption arising from uncertainty is kept to a minimum.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

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3.1 The position of Section 151 Officer is a statutory officer post. It is therefore imperative that the Councils have an Officer who is appointed to this position.

3.2 Bromsgrove District Council is the employing authority for the position of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer. Subject to Members' approval of James Walton's appointment, James Walton will be made available by Bromsgrove District Council under the shared services arrangements to perform such duties as are required by their post for Redditch Borough Council.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The salary costs of the new Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer will be met from existing budgets and is within the Pay Policies of the respective Councils.

4.2 It should be noted that the salary costs will be shared on a 50:50 ratio between the two authorities.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 It is a legal requirement that the appointment of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer, as "statutory officer", is determined as a Council function. 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 of both Councils' Constitutions.

5.2 The Council is 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."

5.3 Section 6 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, further sets out that " (1) On and after the commencement day the Common Council shall – (a) make arrangements for the proper administration of such of its financial affairs as relate to it in its capacity as a local authority, police authority, or port health authority, and (b) secure that one of its officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs".

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- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 There is a requirement under the Officer Employment Procedure rules in both Councils' constitutions, to ensure that the Leaders and any other Cabinet / Executive Committee members are notified and have no objections to the offer of appointment. This must occur before an offer of appointment is made. In this instance, Cabinet / Executive Committee Members will be contacted after the Joint Appointments Committee, subject to recommendations being made about appointment to the position of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer.

6. **OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

Relevant Priorities for the Councils

- 6.1 The appointment of a Director of Finance and Section 151 will ensure there is stability and continuity at both authorities.
- 6.2 Effective financial management underpins all the Councils' operations and the achievement of both Councils' priorities.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.3 There are no specific climate change implications.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 There are no direct equalities or diversity implications.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Failure to agree the appointment to the position of Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer would mean that both Councils would be at risk of failing to comply with the requirement to have an officer in this statutory post.

8. **APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Background Papers

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCILS

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Overarching Framework Agreement between Bromsgrove District
Council and Redditch Borough Council - 21st March 2011