



## FULL COUNCIL

Wednesday, 22 February 2023

<b>Subject</b>	APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER AND SECTION 151 OFFICER
<b>Report by</b>	Councillor Steve Gallant Leader of the Council
<b>Supporting Officer</b>	Chris Bally Chief Executive chris.bally@eastsoffolk.gov.uk 01502 523210

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is <b>NOT</b> in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable.
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards

## Purpose and high-level overview

### **Purpose of Report:**

Local authorities are required to have in place certain statutory officers, one of which is the Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer who undertakes a range of key financial responsibilities. The current postholder, Mr Brian Mew, has given notice that he intends to retire on 31 March 2023, and it is proposed that the Council's current Deputy Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Section 151 Officer, Mrs Lorraine Rogers, steps into the role for six months from 31 March 2022 pending the appointment of a permanent replacement.

### **Options:**

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and appoint one of their officers to have responsibility for the administration of those affairs. The Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer is one of three statutory roles which the Council must have in place, the others being the Head of Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer. Since the Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer is a statutory role, the Council has no option but to ensure the role is filled. The proposed temporary arrangement to cover this post will ensure a smooth transition of any outstanding matters being dealt with by the current postholder at his point of departure.

### **Recommendation:**

That the temporary appointment of Mrs Lorraine Rogers to the post of Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer until a permanent replacement is recruited be approved.

## Corporate Impact Assessment

### **Governance:**

The Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer is responsible for the proper administration of the financial affairs of the Council which includes ensuring the lawfulness and financial prudence of the Council's decision-making, the administration of its financial affairs, contributing to the corporate management of the Council and the provision of financial information and advice. The Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer is therefore integral to the day to day operation of the Council as well as being a statutory officer.

### **ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:**

The Council's Constitution refers to the role and remit of the Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer.

### **Environmental:**

No impact.

### **Equalities and Diversity:**

The postholder ensures that the Council remains financially viable and has a fully sustainable funding position in order to be able to provide a full and effective range of services to all communities across the district.
<b>Financial:</b> The Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer is responsible for ensuring that the Council meets legislative requirements and adheres to the Finance Procedure Rules as set out in the Constitution.
<b>Human Resources:</b> No impact.
<b>ICT:</b> No impact.
<b>Legal:</b> The Council is required to appoint a Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.
<b>Risk:</b> Failure to appoint a Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer would be contrary to Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Council's Constitution.

<b>External Consultees:</b>	None
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## Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the <a href="#">Strategic Plan</a> which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
<b>T01</b>	<b>Growing our Economy</b>		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>T02</b>	<b>Enabling our Communities</b>		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>T03</b>	<b>Maintaining Financial Sustainability</b>		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<b>T04</b>	<b>Delivering Digital Transformation</b>		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>T05</b>	<b>Caring for our Environment</b>		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>XXX</b>	<b>Governance</b>		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>How does this proposal support the priorities selected?</b>  The postholder is responsible for the proper administration of the financial affairs of the Council which includes ensuring the lawfulness and financial prudence of the Council's decision-making, the administration of financial affairs, contributing to the corporate management of the Council and the provision of financial information and advice. In essence, the postholder is responsible for ensuring the Council remains financially viable and able to deliver effective services to all of its communities across the district.			

## Background and Justification for Recommendation

<b>1</b>	<b>Background facts</b>		
1.1	The Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer role is a statutory requirement in accordance with the legislation referred to above.		
<b>2</b>	<b>Current position</b>		
2.1	The current postholder has given notice of his intention to retire on 31 March 2023. In view of this, arrangements must be made to cover the role until a permanent replacement can be found.		
<b>3</b>	<b>How to address current situation</b>		
3.1	Mrs Lorraine Rogers is the Council's Deputy Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Section 151 Officer and has worked for East Suffolk Council and its predecessor councils for 25 years. She works closely with the current postholder and is well qualified, with extensive knowledge of the Council and its procedures as well as being a member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants.		
3.2	Since the Council is approaching its financial year end, it is proposed that the recruitment process begins once the usual frenetic year end procedures have calmed. It is envisaged that a new postholder will be recruited within the next six months.		

4 Reason/s for recommendation	
4.1	The appointment of a Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer is a statutory requirement and the proposal contained within this report will ensure that the Council is compliant with legislation.
4.2	By utilising the experience of an existing officer who has held the role as a Deputy for a number of years, represents the best use of resources and will enable a smooth transition.

## Appendices

Appendices:
None

Background reference papers:
None