

**REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE APPOINTMENT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER  
AND A PROPOSAL TO APPOINT A TEMPORARY DEPUTY  
MONITORING OFFICER**

1. Purpose of Report

The report provides Members with an update on the appointment of a Monitoring Officer and presents a proposal to appoint a Temporary Deputy Monitoring Officer.

2. Appointment of a Monitoring Officer

With the retirement of the current Monitoring Officer the Authority undertook a process to appoint a new Monitoring Officer. However, no applications were received and at the Personnel Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> October, Members asked the Chief Executive to undertake the following actions:

- (a) explore the possibility of the current Monitoring Officer remaining in post until such time as the post was filled;
- (b) approach other local authorities with a view to securing the services of their Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer;
- (c) approach those who had shown an interest initially but had not followed up on the matter, and
- (d) review the job description and person specification.

3. Update

- (a) The current Monitoring Officer has agreed to continue in his role past his retirement date of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017. However, he did reiterate his wish to retire and his limited availability for most of the next two months.

If Members are content with this, it resolves the immediate legal issue of the Authority not having a Monitoring Officer from December 2017 onwards.

- (b) Discussions with other local authorities are ongoing; two have indicated that they do not have the capacity to provide this support, while one has indicated that they have an interest and a meeting has been arranged with the Chief Executive on 5<sup>th</sup> December. However, that Authority has expressed concerns about the level of service required i.e. the proposed 65 days included in the job description.

#### 4. Appointment of a Deputy Monitoring Officer

The difficulty in appointing a Monitoring Officer has led to consideration of different ways of delivering the service. A review of the PCNPA Job Description indicates that the current role is wide ranging beyond a core Monitoring Officer role and receives significant support from the Democratic Services Team. There is therefore scope to reduce the requirements of the post to focus on essential Monitoring Officer tasks with other tasks being allocated to a Deputy Monitoring Officer.

This Deputy role could be appointed from the existing staff, adopting the model used for the Section 151 Officer. This would provide the Authority with greater cover and might provide greater flexibility in securing the services from another Authority or service, or in making the Monitoring Officer appointment.

If Members agree to this approach, it is proposed that initially this will be a temporary arrangement for 12 months, with a review built in to assess its effectiveness in providing the services required by Members. A 12 month period will hopefully cover the Authority during the period of recruitment or securing a new Monitoring Officer and their induction.

The model adopted for the Section 151 officer is to pay a Responsibility Allowance on top of the employee's normal salary and it is proposed to adopt the same approach with this role. An allowance of £1,200 per year is recommended.

The skills and experience required for this role are specific and focused on the work of providing advice and support to Members. If Members approve this option, I will make the appointment.

#### Financial considerations

The proposed cost of appointing a Deputy Monitoring Officer is £1,200 per annum plus on-costs, however, changes to the Monitoring Officer role may allow us to reduce the costs of the latter post.

#### Risk considerations

The proposals ensure that the Authority manages the risk of being without a Monitoring Officer and will ensure that Members are able to access the support required. The appointment of a Temporary Deputy Officer role will make the service more resilient by being less dependent on one individual.

#### Compliance

The proposals ensure that the Authority meets its legal obligations.

#### Welsh Language statement

The proposals ensure that the Authority will be able to meet any Welsh language requirements in relation to the role of the Monitoring Officer.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

##### **That Members:**

1. **note progress in appointing a Monitoring Officer, and**

- 2. agree the principle of creating a Temporary Deputy Monitoring Officer role to be filled internally for a 12 month period with a review of the role being undertaken prior to the end of that period; with a Responsibility Allowance of £1,200 per annum.**

*(For further information, please contact Tegryn Jones, Chief Executive on 01616 624801)*

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