

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Council	
MEETING DATE:	18 September 2025	
TITLE:	Appointment of Director of Finance (S151 Officer)	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
None		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 This report seeks Council's approval of the appointment of a Director of Finance (S151 Officer).

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Restructuring Implementation Committee is recommending that the Council approves:

- 2.1 The appointment of a new Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), Mr Stuart Donnelly from 8th December 2025 (date to be finalised).

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 On 10th December 2024 the Restructuring Implementation Committee appointed Mr Simon Parker to the substantive position of Executive Director of Resources starting on 17th March 2025. As Mr Parker is not a qualified accountant he cannot hold the S151 designation so alternative arrangements were required.
- 3.2 On 20th March 2025, Council approved that a current Director, Mr Jeff Wring, be appointed to the role of S151 Officer on an interim basis from 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025.
- 3.3 The substantive post of Director of Finance (S151 Officer) was advertised externally during late July and August 2025 with a closing date of Monday 18th August 2025. Penna were appointed as the partners to support this recruitment.
- 3.4 12 applications (4 female and 7 male and 1 not stated) were received for the role.

- 3.5 2 applicants (1 female and 1 male) attended face-to-face interviews with a peer panel and the Restructuring Committee on 4th September 2025.
- 3.6 The Committee was impressed by the standard of the shortlisted candidates. After careful consideration of all assessment information, its unanimous decision is to recommend the offer of appointment of Stuart Donnelly, currently Deputy S151 Officer at Reading Borough Council whom it considered demonstrated the necessary skills and experience to lead the Finance function for the Council. He is a qualified accountant and a full member of CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting) since 2008.
- 3.7 It further recommends that the appointment be offered on a starting salary of £104,000 per annum.
- 3.8 Subject to Council agreeing the Committee's recommendations in this report and the completion of necessary checks, it is anticipated that Mr Donnelly will take up the appointment on 8 December 2025 (date to be finalised).

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The Council's Recruitment and Selection policy was followed ensuring that we meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- 4.2 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and appoint a S151 Officer, also known as a Chief Financial Officer (CFO), to have responsibility for those arrangements. As such, the CFO must lead on a local authority's financial functions and ensure they are fit for purpose. CFOs must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 This is a new post. The salary and costs for the post will therefore need to be considered as part of the Council's budget processes for 2026/27.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has not been undertaken. It is a legal requirement for the Council to appoint a Section 151 Officer.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 An impact assessment has not been carried out. The recruitment and selection process was conducted fairly in accordance with the Council's recruitment and selection procedures.
- 7.2 The RIC has ensured, as far as possible, that a diverse range of applicants is considered for the post.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 All council officers have delegated responsibility for ensuring that the Council delivers against its Corporate Strategy with regards to tackling the climate and ecological emergencies. This will include ensuring that the Council leads by

example in all its activities, making the radical changes needed, as well as taking a lead role in influencing and working with partners across all sectors locally, regionally and nationally and ensuring wide and deep citizen engagement.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 This report has been cleared by the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer for circulation.

Contact person	<i>Will Godfrey, Chief Executive</i>
Background papers	<i>CV and financial qualification</i>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	