

18. RATIFICATION OF INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER

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To seek the Committee's formal ratification of the West of England Combined Authority's Interim Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer).

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**REPORT TO: WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE**

DATE: 16 JUNE 2023

REPORT TITLE: RATIFICATION OF INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER

**DIRECTOR: RICHARD ENNIS, INTERIM ACTING CHIEF
EXECUTIVE**

AUTHOR: ALEX HOLLY, HEAD OF PEOPLE AND ASSETS

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek the Committee's formal ratification of Daniel Dickinson becoming the West of England Combined Authority's Interim Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) from 24th June 2023 until a permanent appointment is secured
- 1.2 To seek the Committee's formal ratification of Tom Clark acting as the West of England Combined Authority's Monitoring Officer for a one-week period (17th June 2023 until 23rd June 2023 inclusive).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee ratifies the appointment of Daniel Dickinson as Interim Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer).
- 2.2 The Committee ratifies the appointment of Tom Clark as the Combined Authority's interim Monitoring Officer for a one-week period (17th June 2023 until 23rd June 2023 inclusive).

3. Background / Issues for Consideration

- 3.1 Stephen Gerrard, the Combined Authority's current Monitoring Officer, handed in his notice in March 2023, and leaves the Authority on 16th June 2023.
- 3.2 In early June 2023, three candidates were interviewed for the interim role. The preferred candidate is Daniel Dickinson, who was interviewed on 7th June 2023.
- 3.3 The interview panel was chaired by the Interim Acting Chief Executive, and included representation from the Monitoring Officer of Bristol City Council.

- 3.4 Daniel has a strong CV with significant experience in Local Government as a Monitoring Officer. Daniel was the highest scoring interviewee and all panel members were satisfied of his suitability to undertake the Monitoring Officer role.
- 3.5 Daniel will commence the role on a part-time basis from 26th June 2023, taking on the statutory monitoring officer role from this point, and will move into the role on a full-time basis from 10th July 2023.
- 3.6 As a result, there is a gap of one week between Stephen Gerrard leaving, and Daniel Dickinson being able to undertake the role. It is proposed that this gap is filled by Tom Clark, who is currently interim Head of Legal Services, and has significant experience in Local Government as a Monitoring Officer. Tom is leaving the Authority on 23rd June 2023, so will be able to fill the gap for this one-week period.
- 3.7 In parallel, Solace have been directly engaged by the Combined Authority to seek a substantive appointment for both this role and the Director of Corporate Services (s.73) role, so we expect both of these roles to be filled on a permanent basis over the coming months.
- 3.8 It is therefore proposed that Daniel Dickinson is appointed as the interim Director of Legal Services and statutory Monitoring Officer, pending substantive recruitment to the role, and that the one-week gap in Monitoring Officer representation is covered by Tom Clark.

4. Risk Management/Assessment

- 4.1 The endorsement of the recommendation outlined in this report will ensure this Statutory role is filled at a crucial time for the Authority.

5. Finance Implications, including economic impact assessment where appropriate:

- 5.1 The financial implications associated with agreeing the recommendations can be covered from within the existing revenue budget and the anticipated 2023/24 budget.

Advice given by: Selonge Russell, Head of Finance, Deputy S73 Officer.

6 Legal Implications:

- 6.1 The West of England Combined Authority is legally required to appoint a Monitoring Officer.

Advice given by: Stephen Gerrard, Interim Director of Law and Governance

7 Human Resources Implications:

- 7.1 A thorough interview was conducted with the recommended candidate. The ratification of the proposed interim appointment will ensure that the Authority can continue to deliver its statutory requirements until a permanent appointment is secured.

Advice given by: Alex Holly, Head of People and Assets