

Report subject	Recruitment of Interim Chief of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Meeting date	24 February 2026
Status	Public Report (Appendix 1, Exempt)
Executive summary	<p>This report invites the Council to approve the appointment of Matthew Filmer to the position of Interim Chief of Finance & Section 151 Officer in accordance with the Council's Constitution and statutory requirements.</p> <p>A summary of Mr Filmer's skills, experience and employment history is shown within appendix 1 of this report.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is recommended that:</p> <p>Council approve the appointment of Matthew Filmer to the position of Interim Chief of Finance & Section 151 Officer.</p>
Reason for recommendations	Constitution - Appointment of Head of the Paid Service, Chief Officers (Tier 2 Appointments), Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Mike Cox, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance
Chief Executive	Aidan Dunn
Report Authors	<p>Sarah Deane, Director of People and Culture</p> <p>Jon Matthews, Head of Resourcing, Employee Relations & Change</p>
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	Decision

1. Background

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with detail of the recruitment process undertaken to source and select the preferred candidate to be appointed to the position of Interim Chief of Finance & Section 151 Officer.

2. Recruitment Process

1. The Council's Constitution sets out the requirements for senior appointments as follows:
 - a. Article 11 - Officers 1. Management Structure
 - 1.1. General - The Council may engage such staff (referred to as Officers) as it considers necessary to carry out its functions.
 - 1.2. Chief Officers - The Council will engage persons for the following posts, who will be designated Chief Officers:
 - (a) Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
 - (b) Directors who report directly to the Chief Executive within the line management structure
 - 1.3. The process of selection and recruitment of the above Chief Officers shall be undertaken in accordance with provisions set out in the Employment and Procedure Rules - Part 4E of the Constitution.
2. The Constitution requires that Chief Officer roles are advertised in a manner that is likely to reach individuals who are suitably qualified to apply. For this interim appointment, which is limited to a six-month period, the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive agreed that it was appropriate to invite expressions of interest internally from colleagues who report directly to the current Section 151 Officer, in order to maintain continuity and stability in the short term.
3. It should be noted that the recruitment process for the permanent position is already underway. The role will be subject to a full, open, and competitive external campaign, including national advertising in the Municipal Journal and an active search delivered in partnership with Penna, our appointed executive recruitment specialists for our executive resource requirements.
4. The employment rules within the Constitution state that appointments will be made by Council following a process arranged by the Director of People and Culture and in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
 - a. The selection process for the Interim Chief of Finance & Section 151 Officer comprised of the following:-

- i. Expressions of interest were invited from all colleagues who report to the current Chief of Finance and 151 officer.
- ii. Mr Filmer was invited to an Assessment Centre held on Wednesday 11th February where he presented to the formal panel. Following the presentation, he was asked a range of questions. The formal panel comprised of the following:-
 - Cllr Millie Earl (Leader of the Council),
 - Cllr Jeff Hanna, Cabinet Member for Transformation, Resources and Governance
 - Cllr John Beesley (Leader of the Conservative Party)
 - Cllr Peter Cooper (Labour Party)
 - Aidan Dunn, (Chief Executive),
 - Sarah Deane, (Director of People and Culture)
 - Bernadette MacDonald- Raggett (Independent Observer)
- iii. As part of the selection process, Mr Filmer also undertook a technical interview to assess his capability to perform the duties of the role. This interview was facilitated by Mr Sean Cremer, Corporate Director for Finance & Commercial and Section 151 Officer at Dorset Council, who provided detailed feedback to the selection panel ahead of the formal interview.

3. Recommended Candidate

Mr Filmer was unanimously proposed by the formal selection panel as having the relevant skills and knowledge required to undertake the role. It is therefore recommended that Council approve this appointment.

A summary of Mr Filmer's skills and career history is shown at Appendix 1.

4. Summary of financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report, as the role is within the current establishment budget

5. Summary of legal implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. Summary of human resources implications

There are no human resources implications arising from this report

7. Summary of sustainability impact

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

8. Summary of public health implications

There are no public health implications arising from this report.

9. Summary of equality implications

Candidates were assessed using objective assessment criteria. The selection process was also observed by an independent observer.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Candidate Summary – Matthew Filmer