

Report subject	Recruitment of Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer
Meeting date	12 May 2026
Status	Public Report (Appendix Exempt)
Executive summary	<p>This report invites the Council to approve the appointment of Tim O’Gara to the position of Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer in accordance with the Council’s Constitution and statutory requirements.</p> <p>A summary of Mr O’Gara’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 Tim O’Gara to the position of Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring 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	Cllr Jeff Hanna (Portfolio holder for Transformation, Resources and Governance)
Chief Executive	Aidan Dunn
Report Authors	<p>Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive</p> <p>Sarah Deane, Director of People and Culture</p> <p>Jon Matthews, Head of Resourcing, Employee Relations and Change</p> <p>Isabel Hall, Senior Talent Advisor</p>
Wards	All
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 Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer.

2 Recruitment Process

2.1 The Council's Constitution sets out the requirements for senior appointments as follows:

Article 11 - Officers 1. Management Structure

2.1.1 General - The Council may engage such staff (referred to as Officers) as it considers necessary to carry out its functions.

2.1.2. 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

2.1.3 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.

2.2 The Constitution states that Chief Officer roles should be advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for them. The Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer role was advertised in the Municipal Journal (the MJ) and LinkedIn to ensure the council attracted the widest pool of applicants.

2.3 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.

2.4 The selection process for the Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer comprised of the following:-

2.4.1 Penna, an established executive search company for local government was selected to support the council in resourcing for the role.

2.4.2 Candidates were selected from a long list of applications and attended a technical interview facilitated by an external assessor Asif Ibrahim, Director of Legal Services, Manchester City Council.

2.4.3 Following the technical interviews, feedback was presented to panel members who agreed the shortlist.

2.4.4 Shortlisted candidates attended an Assessment Centre on Wednesday, 15th April and Wednesday 22nd April, where they delivered a presentation to the formal panel. Following the presentation, they were asked a series of competency-based interview questions.

2.4.5 The formal panel comprised of the following:-

- Cllr Millie Earl (Leader of the Council),
- Cllr Dr Felicity Rice (Poole People Group),
- Cllr Jeff Hanna (Portfolio holder for Transformation, Resources and Governance),
- Cllr John Beasley (Leader of the Conservative Group),
- Cllr Patrick Canavan (Leader of the Labour Group),
- Aidan Dunn (Chief Executive),
- Sarah Deane (Director of People and Culture),
- Bernadette MacDonald-Raggett (Independent Observer).

2.4.6 Candidates also presented to two stakeholder engagement panels consisting of the following:-

Panel 1 - Audit and Governance Panel

- Cllr Vanessa Ricketts (Chair of The Standards Committee, Christchurch Independents Group),
- Cllr Eleanor Conolly (Chair of The Audit and Governance Committee),
- Cllr Michael Tarling (Liberal Democrat Group),
- Cllr Marcus Andrews (Liberal Democrat Group),

Panel 2 – Corporate Management Board

- Glynn Barton (Chief Operations Officer),
- Laura Ambler (Corporate Director of Wellbeing),
- Cathi Hadley (Corporate Director, Children's Services),
- Juliette Blake (Director, Children's Services),
- Isla Reynolds (Director of Marketing, Communication and Policy),
- Sarah Chamberlain (Director of IT and Programmes).

2.4.7 As well as attending the panels above, candidates completed a timed financial exercise.

3. Recommended Candidate

3.1 Tim O'Gara was proposed by the majority of the formal selection panel as the preferred candidate to be offered the role of Director of Legal and Governance & Monitoring Officer. It is recommended that Council approve this appointment. A conditional offer of employment has been issued to Mr O'Gara, subject to Full Council approval of his appointment and the completion of all necessary pre-employment checks.

3.2 Tim brings with him a wealth of experience. A summary of his skills and career history is shown at Appendix 1.

4 Summary of financial implications

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

5 Summary of legal implications

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6 Summary of sustainability impact

6.1 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

7 Summary of public health implications

7.1 There are no public health implications arising from this report.

8 Summary of equality implications

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

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Candidate Summary – Tim O’Gara