



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and Date of Committee	COUNCIL – 20 MAY 2026
Subject	APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF PLACE
Wards Affected	All
Accountable Member	Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council. Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer. Email: Giles.Hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Report Author	Kathryn Dowell, Strategic People Lead Email: kathryn.dowell@westoxon.gov.uk
Purpose	<p>Following the interview process and the subsequent conditional appointment of Daniel Taylor to the position of Director of Place, via a secondment from Essex County Council to West Oxfordshire District Council, it was agreed that the salary for this role would be £104,722 per annum, plus the applicable pending pay award.</p> <p>In accordance with the Council's Pay Policy, Full Council retains the authority to approve any new appointment to a post where the total remuneration package (including all payments and benefits in kind) exceeds £100,000</p> <p>Please note that the Director of Place does not hold statutory responsibilities and, as such, this appointment did not require approval via the Performance and Appointments Committee.</p>
Annex	Annex A – Job Description, Director of Place.
Recommendations	<p>That Council Resolves to:</p> <p>Confirm the salary for the Director of Place as £104,722 per annum, plus the applicable pending pay award.</p>

Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Putting Residents First ● A Good Quality of Life for All ● A Better Environment for People and Wildlife ● Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency ● Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Director of Governance and Regulatory Services Director of Finance Head of Legal

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's Director of Place role is due to become vacant as the current postholder has been appointed to the position of Chief Executive, commencing 1 June, following the retirement of the existing Chief Executive.
- 2.2 The Director of Place role does not carry statutory responsibilities and therefore does not require approval by the Performance and Appointments Committee. However, given its status as a Director-level post and its strategic importance within the Council's senior leadership structure, the recruitment process included both stakeholder engagement and Member interview panels.
- 2.3 As is standard practice following a resignation, a review of the role and its requirements was undertaken. The Chief Executive, working alongside Publica's Recruitment Team, completed a full review of the Job Description to ensure it remained aligned with the Council's strategic priorities and operational needs.
- 2.4 The updated Job Description is provided at Appendix A.
- 2.5 The timetable for the recruitment process was as follows:
- Applications closed on 29 March 2026;
 - Shortlisting and technical interviews held 14 and 21 April 2026 (please see below);
 - Council consideration, 20 May 2026

The interview panels were as follows:

14 April 2026	First Stage Interviews	Giles Hughes Phillip Martin Andrea McCaskie Cheryl Sloane
21 April 2026	Stakeholder Panel Interviews	Andrea McCaskie Madhu Richards Frank Wilson
21 April 2026	Member Panel Interviews	Cllr Andy Graham – Chair Cllr Duncan Enright Giles Hughes Phillip Martin

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1 The Director of Place is a key role for the Council with responsibilities for a number of the Council's key priorities. The role will be part of the Council's Senior Leadership Team, working closely with the Chief Executive, the Director of Governance and Regulatory Services, the Director of Finance, Publica locality leads, elected members, and partners to help the Council deliver on its priorities in the current challenging environment.

3.2 The successful candidate following comprehensive interviews was Daniel Taylor who has requested that his appointment be part of a secondment (start to be confirmed) from Essex County Council to the West Oxfordshire District Council. The secondment between Essex County Council and West Oxfordshire District Council will conclude on the Local Government Reorganisation Vesting Day, which is currently anticipated to be 31 March 2028.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 Full Council may decide not to approve the proposed salary of £104,722, which would prevent the appointment from progressing and require alternative arrangements to be considered.

4.2 The salary for the Director of Place is commensurate with its peers, aligning with the remuneration of the Council's other Director-level posts and in recognition of the competitive jobs market for this senior role.

4.3 Delaying the recruitment of the Director of Place would require a redistribution of the role's strategic and operational responsibilities across the remaining Senior Leadership Team. While this could deliver short-term savings, it would also reduce dedicated capacity for place-based services, economic development, and major projects, and may impact the Council's ability to deliver a number of its corporate priorities and implement Local Government Reorganisation.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 It was agreed that the salary for this position would be £104,722 per annum plus a pending pay award pending.

5.2 As per the Council's Pay Policy, Full Council will retain the decision to make any new appointment of an Officer where the pay (incorporating all payments and benefits in kind) exceeds £100,000.

5.3 The salary for the Director of Place is commensurate with its peers, aligning with the remuneration of the Council's other Director-level posts and in recognition of the competitive jobs market for this senior role.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from the appointment to the Director of Place role.

6.2 The post does not carry statutory responsibilities, and therefore the appointment does not require approval via the Performance and Appointments Committee however as this salary is over £100,000 per annum, no appointment can be made without the formal approval of Full Council.

6.3 The recruitment process has been undertaken in accordance with the Council's constitutional requirements, relevant employment legislation, and established HR policies, ensuring fairness, transparency, and compliance with all applicable regulations.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 The primary risk associated with not appointing a Director of Place is a reduction in strategic capacity across key service areas, including economic development, regeneration, and major

projects. Failure to fill the post could place additional pressure on the remaining Senior Leadership Team and may impact the Council's ability to deliver on a number of its corporate priorities effectively. A failure to recruit would also, by reducing senior management capacity, compromise the Council's ability to prepare for Local Government Reorganisation.

7.2 There is also a risk of reduced organisational resilience if the role is left vacant for an extended period. These risks have been mitigated through a robust recruitment process, ensuring that the proposed appointment is made in accordance with the Council's governance framework and employment policies.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.1 The recruitment is following best practice with a fair, equal and transparent process, reducing bias and designed to select the strongest candidate on merit.

9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

(END)