



## OFFICER REPORT TO COUNCIL

### APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER TO THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

#### KEY ISSUE/DECISION:

At its meeting on 12 October Council agreed to the appointment of an Independent Member to the Audit and Governance Committee. Recruitment to this post has been undertaken and the role has been offered. Council is asked to ratify the appointment of the Independent Member for a period of 4 years as detailed in the report.

#### BACKGROUND:

At its meeting on 12 October 2021 Council agreed the following:

- a) The principle of appointing an Independent Member to the Audit and Governance Committee for a period of four years.
- b) The recruitment of the Independent Member, to be led by a panel consisting of the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, one Conservative group member and two opposition group members (appointed by Group Leaders) and supported by the Director of Law and Governance.
- c) Following the recruitment process, a report to formally appoint the Independent Member be presented to a future Council meeting.
- d) To delegate to the Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, authority to finalise the role description, skills, competencies and person specification.

#### RECRUITMENT PROCESS UNDERTAKEN:

A recruitment campaign has been conducted with an advertisement placed on all the usual recruitment websites used by Surrey County Council: Guardian Jobs, JobsGoPublic, Reed, Indeed, Find a Job (GOV) and LinkedIn.

Applicants were asked to send a covering statement to express their interest and explain how they meet the desired requirements, together with a CV before the closing date.

A recruitment panel met to interview suitable candidates on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The panel consisted of the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee (David Lewis), one Conservative group member (Victor Lewanski), and two opposition group members (Nick Darby and Stephen Cooksey) and was supported by the Director of Law and Governance and following the interview process, members of the Audit and Governance Committee were updated on the outcome of the interviews.

#### **CONFIRMATION OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE:**

The recruitment panel agreed to offer the role to Terry Price and Mr Price has confirmed that he would like to accept the role.

Mr Price brings a wealth of experience to the role and has a background in Local Government Finance. He has held various public sector non-executive posts at several organisations including the Immigration Services Commissioner, Elmbridge Borough Council, Ashford and St Peter's NHS Foundation Trust, the National Fire Services Training College and the Children's Commissioner for England.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council agrees to the appointment of Terry Price as the Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee for a period of 4 years.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Any costs associated with the recruitment, selection, appointment and subsequent disbursements to any Independent Member were met from within existing revenue service budgets.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

A council's audit committee is established further to the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 and its purpose is to give assurance to elected Members and the public about the governance, financial reporting and performance of the Council. The appointment of a non-voting Independent Member on the committee will assist and promote good governance and scrutiny of the committee.

#### **RISK IMPLICATIONS:**

Subject to adequate vetting procedures and adherence to the Person Specification, this initiative should augment the Audit and Governance Committee's independence, provide additional expertise, and provide an

opportunity for the community to play an enhanced role in the governance of the Council.

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**Contact Officer:**

Paul Evans, Director of Law and Governance

[paul.evans@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:paul.evans@surreycc.gov.uk)

**Sources/background papers:**

Arrangements at other local authorities

CIPFA Guidance

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