

Audit and Governance Committee
13 March 2024

Appointment of Independent Member to the Audit and Governance Committee

Purpose of the report:

This report details the process undertaken to date to recruit an Independent Member to the Audit and Governance Committee and confirms that the preferred candidate will be recommended to County Council for appointment as the Independent Member to the Audit and Governance Committee.

Recommendation:

That the Audit and Governance Committee notes the recruitment process being undertaken and following an interview process, will recommend the preferred candidate to County Council to be appointed as the Independent Member to the Audit and Governance Committee.

Introduction:

1. A vacancy has arisen for an Independent Member to the Audit and Governance Committee when the current Independent Member stands down following the March Committee, the appointment will be for a period of four years.
2. At its meeting on 12 October 2021 Council agreed that the Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, be delegated the authority to finalise the role description, skills, competencies and person specification.

Recruitment Process:

3. A recruitment campaign began with the advert going live on 30 January 2024, with an advertisement placed on Surrey County Council's website and all the usual recruitment websites used by the Council: Guardian Jobs, Surreyjobs, JobsGoPublic, Indeed, Find a Job (GOV) and LinkedIn.

4. 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.
5. A recruitment panel will be convened to interview suitable candidates. The panel will consist of the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, one Conservative group member, and two opposition group members (appointed by Group Leaders), supported by the Director of Law and Governance.
6. Following the interview process, members of the Audit and Governance Committee will be updated and a recommendation of the successful candidate will be put forward to County Council for approval.

Financial Implications:

7. This is an unpaid appointment; the Independent Member will be able to claim travel expenses, which will be covered from the existing budget.

Legal Implications:

8. 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 to the Committee will assist and promote good governance and scrutiny by the Committee and the Council.

Risk Implications:

9. 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.

Next steps:

10. The name of the preferred candidate be submitted to a future County Council meeting for approval.

Contact Officer:

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Annexes/Appendices:

None

Sources/background papers:

Role profile, advertisement, list of candidates, interview process.

Applications and interview notes include personal data and are not therefore background papers.