



Council
16 November 2015

Subject: Appointment of Independent Member to the Governance and Audit Committee

Report by:

Monitoring Officer

Contact Officer:

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Governance and Civic Officer

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Purpose / Summary:

To appoint an Independent Member to serve on the Governance and Audit Committee.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) That the person named in paragraph 2 be appointed to serve on the Governance and Audit Committee with immediate effect and up to the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2019.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: If Council support the recommendation , Mr Morris will have co-opted status and be bound by the adopted Members' Code of Conduct.

Financial : There will be a payment of £38.18 for the first four hours of attendance and a second payment for attendance in excess of four hours. This can be met from the existing budget for payment to Members. Furthermore Co-opted Members are also eligible to claim from the Members ICT Provision Scheme, again this can be met from existing budget provision.

Staffing : None related to this report.

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :
N/A**

Risk Assessment : N/A

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities : None related to this report.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

Yes

No

Key Decision:

Yes

No

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2015, Council re-appointed Mrs Alison Adams and Mr Peter Walton to serve as the Independent Members on the Governance and Audit Committee until May 2017.
- 1.2 The Governance and Audit Committee's views regarding the future of independent members serving on the Committee had previously been sought at their meeting on 8 January 2015.
- 1.3 The arising minute from this debate is set out below: -

65 DISCUSSION ITEM - CO-OPTED MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Members were asked to give consideration to the following areas in respect of the future of co-opted Members on the Committee: -

1. The number of co-opted Members
2. The terms of office for each
3. The recruitment process for co-opted Members
4. Remuneration

Discussion ensued during which the following views and comments were noted: -

In respect of 1: The Committee were of the view that the number should be increased and suggested three in total.

In respect of 2: The Committee were of the view that the term of office for each should be four years but that these should be staggered. ie not all expiring on the same date. A number of suggestions as to how this could be achieved were made. It was also suggested the current co-opted Members be retained for a suggested two year period initially and an additional Member be recruited from May 15.

In respect of 3: The recruitment process remain that which had previously been adopted. Namely, external advert followed by an interview with the Monitoring Officer and Chair of Governance and Audit Committee.

In respect of 4: The remuneration level be reconsidered, either by the remuneration panel or another appropriate body / officer.

There was also a general discussion regarding the size of the Committee in the future. All were of the view that this should be reduced if possible, be non-political and if necessary have political balance rules suspended to achieve such.

RESOLVED that the views expressed above be taken into consideration when recruiting in May 2015.

- 1.4 As advised in the report to Annual Council in May 2015, a recruitment exercise was undertaken during March 2015 to seek a further Independent Member to serve on the Governance and Audit Committee, again in line with the views expressed by the Committee set out at 1.3 above.
- 1.5 Unfortunately only one person expressed an interest, but was unable to make the interview date.
- 1.6 The position was re-advertised during the summer months, using the Council's website, Copies of the advertisement, job description and person specification are attached at Appendix A. This resulted in two people expressing an interest and submitting applications.
- 1.7 Shortlisting took place and the candidates were both deemed to meet the person specification and thus were invited for interview.
- 1.8 Interviews were held on 20 October 2015 and the Panel consisted of Councillor Giles McNeill (Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee) and the Monitoring Officer. Katie Coughlan, Governance and Civic Officer, was also present.
- 1.9 At interview, whilst both candidates proved eminently suitable, the person recommended for appointment is set out at Section 2.

2. Recommended for Appointment

- 2.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that the person named below be appointed to serve as an Independent Member on the Governance and Audit Committee
 - **Mr Andrew Morris**
- 2.3 It is further **RECOMMENDED** that the appointment in this instance be up until Annual Council May 2019, thereby meeting the Governance and Audit Committee's previously expressed views regarding staggering the expiry dates of appointments (referred to at 1.3 above).

West Lindsey District Council

WANT TO DO SOMETHING WORTHWHILE FOR YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF WEST LINDSEY'S GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE?

West Lindsey District Council is looking for an independent person who would like to be considered for membership of the Governance and Audit Committee. The Council is looking for someone who has knowledge of local government finance and who could demonstrate an ability to establish good working relationships with Councillors and managers.

The Council needs someone who is resident or working in the District, who is objective and politically independent, with the ability to analyse information, to join the Panel.

In return you can look forward to doing something interesting and worthwhile for the local community. You will be paid an allowance of £38.18 per meeting plus travelling expenses (currently under review).

If this opportunity interests you but you would like to discuss it further without committing yourself, please telephone Alan Robinson, Head of Revenues Benefits and Central Services, on 01427 676509. Alternatively, you can just request an information pack and application details by calling 01427 676594 / 676595, or by email on committeeadmin@west-lindsey.gov.uk

The Council has a commitment to equal opportunities and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community. Also we operate a no smoking policy.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Governance & Audit Committee – Independent Person

Experience

You will be a person who has experience of working in a medium/large organisation at a senior level or other experience which would give similar benefits.

Financial management experience (accountancy, audit or management of a large budget) would be advantageous.

Skills

- Able to understand complex issues and the importance of accountability and probity in public life.
- Able to analyse and assess evidence and come to a rational conclusion.
- Able to reconcile the ideal with reality and practicality.
- Able to demonstrate objectivity.
- Able to demonstrate integrity and discretion.
- Able to make decisions.
- Must possess effective interpersonal skills.

Knowledge

Some knowledge of local government would be useful.

Knowledge of corporate governance arrangements in either public or private sectors would be beneficial.

Knowledge of risk management.

Commitment

This post will take up about seven evenings per annum for meetings plus preparation time.

Other

- You must not be a Councillor or Officer of the Council or have been so in the preceding five years prior to the appointment.
- You must have no criminal convictions.

- You must not be an undischarged bankrupt.
- You should have no significant business dealings with the Council.
- You should have no connection with any political group.

Payment

This public office does not command a salary, however a modest allowance will be paid together with reimbursement for travelling and subsistence expenses.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Requirement	Essential	Desirable
1. Educational	<p>Appropriate financial training and experience</p> <p>Knowledge of internal control and audit standards</p>	Demonstrate continued updating of professional skills
2. Work Experience	<p>Able to demonstrate the ability to work closely with politicians</p> <p>Experience of the internal control function in a large, multi-disciplinary organisation</p> <p>Operated within a formal risk management framework</p> <p>Worked for 10 years at a senior level</p>	Previously chaired an audit committee or similar
3. Abilities, Intelligence & Special Aptitudes	<p>Influencing and consensus building</p> <p>Listening skills</p>	Knowledge of local government finance
4. Adjustment & Social Skills	<p>Ability to establish good working relationships with Councillors and managers</p> <p>Ability to manage and present information orally to groups in politically sensitive environments</p> <p>Able to demonstrate strong leadership</p> <p>Assertive in pursuing the correct course of action</p> <p>Able to work effectively with colleagues who may have different</p>	<p>Diplomacy and tact</p> <p>Live in or have connections with the County</p>

	levels of experience and understanding	
5. Motivation	Enthusiastic, not easily deterred and able to convey enthusiasm to others Committed to excellent public services	
6. Equal Opportunities	Understanding and commitment to promoting equality of opportunity in service delivery with an understanding of the issues underpinning these values	