

Full Council

20 July 2023

Report of the Director of Governance
(Portfolio of the Executive Leader)

Independent Person – Audit & Governance Committee

Summary

1. This report seeks Council's approval to provisionally extend the term of office of the currently appointed independent person on the Audit & Governance Committee for a further 2 years.

Recommendations

2. To extend the current term of office of the Independent Person (Mr Joe Leigh) appointed to Audit & Governance Committee for a further 2 years on the proviso that Mr Leigh provide up to 3 months' notice should he wish to resign from the office.

Reason: To ensure continuity of office for the immediate future.

Background

3. Mr Leigh was initially appointed to the role of Independent Person for 1 year on the basis that his primary commitment to the Council was as an Independent Person sitting on Joint Standards Committee and performing both roles was a significant time commitment. Although supporting Joint Standards Committee remains Mr Leigh's main objective, he has kindly agreed to retain his position on Audit & Governance Committee for a further 2 years, subject to Council approval.
4. It should be noted that Mr Leigh is under no obligation to complete this term, however, and may choose to resign at any point in time, as can any other appointed independent person. However, Mr Leigh has kindly indicated that he will give 3 months' notice should he wish to resign.

5. There remains one outstanding vacancy for a second independent person on Audit & Governance Committee, which the Council will seek to fill as soon as possible.

Consultations

6. The Council is now being consulted on the proposed extension to Mr Leigh's appointment.

Options

7. The Council can decide to extend Mr Leigh's appointment or not.

Analysis

8. If Council chooses not to extend Mr Leigh's appointment, that will leave 2 full vacancies for independent persons on the Committee, which the Council would need to seek to fill.

Council Plan and Policy Framework

9. The Council is currently putting together its new Council Plan to support the work of the newly elected Administration moving forward. Securing independent persons on specific Committees meets legislative guidance or good practice and helps Councillors to fulfil their objectives whilst having their practices robustly challenged and reviewed.

Implications

10. There are no known other implications arising from the recommendations in the report other than legal requirements relating to the statutory appointment of independent persons.

Risk Management

11. If the Council do not appoint an Independent Persons to Audit & governance Committee, it would fail to meet good practice requirements relating to independent challenge surrounding its governance arrangements.

Contact Details

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Job Title: Director of Governance

Report Approved

Date 12/7/23

Specialist Implications Officer(s) Frances Harrison, Head of Legal Services

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None

Abbreviations used in this report

None