

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Audit and Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 16th March 2017
Report of: Director of Legal Services
Title: Update on the Appointment of an Independent Person to the Audit and Governance Committee
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Findlow

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The Council at its meeting on 22nd October 2015 amended the Audit and Governance Committee's membership to include the appointment of an independent person who is not an elected councillor. The appointment process for the independent person was agreed at the 30th June 2016 meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee; to follow a similar process for the recruitment of Independent Persons for considering code of conduct complaints, except that the Committee itself would be asked to approve the co-option of the recommended candidate.
- 1.2 Following public advertisement at the start of this year, three applicants were interviewed by the appointment panel on 3rd March 2017. Following the interview process, and subject to references successfully being obtained, the appointment panel recommend the co-option of one of the candidates to the Audit and Governance Committee. The name of the candidate will be circulated to Members prior to the commencement of the Audit and Governance Committee on 16th March.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee approve the co-option of the recommended candidate.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure the Committee is compliant with the membership changes at the recommended by the Constitution Committee and approved by Council on 22nd October 2015.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All wards.

5.0 Policy Implications

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Chief Operating Officer)

- 6.1 There are no significant financial implications which arise as a consequence of the co-option of the recommended candidate. The independent candidate is entitled to claim travel and subsistence expenditure and a meeting allowance consistent with the arrangements in place for other non-elected, co-opted committee members.

7.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Head of Legal Services)

- 7.1 The co-option is required to ensure the Committee complies with the updated membership changes approved by Council and included in the Constitution.

8.0 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 The co-option of an independent member is designed to reinforce political neutrality as well as supplementing the skills and knowledge in the committee.

9.0 Background

- 9.1 In accordance with the agreed arrangements, a person specification and role profile for the Audit and Governance Committee's independent member was drawn up in accordance with best practice from other authorities and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).
- 9.2 The role was advertised on the Council's website, supported by a press release, which was picked up in a number of local newspapers and websites, as well as mentions on the Council's social media channels. This attracted a number of well qualified applicants.
- 9.3 Following a structured interview process, applicants were interviewed on 3rd March 2017, by the agreed appointment panel of the chairman, vice chair and Councillor Amanda Stott. The Director of Legal Services was present during the interviews. The panel agreed on the preferred candidate and references are being taken up. The name of the candidate will be circulated prior to the Audit and Governance Committee on 16th March 2017.

10.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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