

CIPFA's POSITION STATEMENT: AUDIT COMMITTEES IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 25 April 2023, the Audit Committee considered the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) updated Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022.
- 1.2 The Committee were advised that the Guidance continued to include a strong focus on the factors that supported improvement in the working of audit committees. This included the knowledge and skills that Audit Committee members require and an emphasis on where the Audit Committee can add value. It also provided practical support in evaluating the existing Committee and planning any improvements identified.

2. CO-OPTED INDEPENDENT MEMBER

- 2.1 The CIPFA updated Position Statement recommends that “audit committees of local authorities should include co-opted independent members in accordance with the appropriate legislation. Where there is no legislative direction to include co-opted independent members, CIPFA recommends that each authority audit committee should include at least two co-opted independent members to provide appropriate technical expertise”. There is no legislative direction for Borough Councils.
- 2.2 To enable the authority to meet the best practice set down by CIPFA the constitution of the authority needs to be amended to enable the committee to appoint two co-opted independent members.
- 2.3 The working group met on 13 June 2023 where it was agreed to develop a person specification/ job description to enable the authority to meet the best practice detailed within the Position Statement, included at appendix A

3. TRAINING NEEDS

- 3.1 The training plan was discussed at the working group meeting held 13 September and the proposals for training will be presented to the committee at the next meeting.

CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR AUDIT COMMITTEE

Charnwood Borough Council is committed to the highest standards of corporate governance, and our Audit Committee is a key part of ensuring that we meet those standards. The Council is currently looking to appoint an independent co-opted member of the Committee, to become a part of its work in promoting excellence in governance, risk management, financial reporting and counter fraud.

Independent Members will be expected to actively participate in meetings of the Audit Committee and demonstrate independence, integrity, objectivity and impartiality in their decision-making. As part of this rewarding role, they will support the Council's Audit Committee in providing independent assurance to the members of Charnwood District Council, and its wider citizens and stakeholders.

Independent Members are non-voting members of the Committee, who assist in overseeing internal and external audit arrangements, reviewing and scrutinising financial statements, and reviewing and assessing the governance, risk management and control of the authority.

The terms of reference for the Audit Committee can be found in the Council's Constitution which is published on our website.

About you

The Audit Committee is seeking an independent member with a wide range of skills and experience. The ideal candidate would have a strong knowledge of one or more of financial management, governance and control, possibly with a background in audit or finance in public services or the not-for-profit sector.

The Independent Member will be appointed for a four-year period. We have a preference for candidates who have either lived or worked within the Borough or have a connection to the Borough.

Successful candidates will be expected to attend approximately five Committee meetings per year, which take place at the council offices, Southfield Road, Loughborough. They will also need to commit sufficient time to read Committee papers in advance of these meetings, liaise with the Chair and to undertake occasional training alongside the other Committee members.

Independence

A person can only be an independent person if that person:

- is not a member, co-opted member or officer of the authority, or has been within the last 5 years;
- is not a member, co-opted member or officer of a parish council of which the authority is the principal authority, or has been within the last 5 years;
- is not a relative or close friend, of a person within (a) and (b) as detailed below;

- has submitted an application form in response to an advert for the position at the authority;
- in addition to be eligible for appointment, a person must not be disqualified from holding office as a Member of the Council. Accordingly, any person who is recommended for appointment will be required to confirm that he/she is not disqualified.

The regulations say that a ‘relative’ means:

- a) the other person’s spouse or civil partner;
- b) living with the other person as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners;
- c) a grandparent of the other person;
- d) a lineal descendant of a grandparent of the other person;
- e) a parent, sibling or child of a person within paragraph (a) or (b);
- f) the spouse or civil partner of a person within paragraph (c), (d) or (e), or
- g) living with a person within paragraph (c), (d) or (e) as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners.

Selection Criteria

The ideal candidate for the position will:

1. Be willing and able to commit the necessary time to the role;
2. Have up to date skills, knowledge and experience within at least one of the fields covered within Audit Committee, i.e. internal audit, risk management, governance, accounting, anti-fraud and corruption;
3. Have good interpersonal skills, including good communication skills both written and oral and the ability to co-operate with others in a committee setting.
4. Have independence of mind, objectivity and impartiality.
5. Contribute proactive, proportionate, independent thought and listen to, and balance, advice;
6. Have a commitment to the general principles governing the conduct of Councillors generally and work to high behavioural standards, demonstrating honesty, probity and integrity;
7. Not be a serving local government officer or councillor;
8. Have no personal, legal or contractual relationship with Charnwood Borough Council (including employees or Members or former staff), or any other relationship / activity which might represent a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest.

Desirable additional criteria are:

1. A suitable professional or management qualification (in internal audit, risk management, governance, accounting or other relevant discipline)

2. An understanding of the complexity of issues surrounding audit, risk management, governance and finance in local government.
3. An understanding of the Council's vision, priorities and objectives
4. An ability to understand complex situations and reports, as well as the statutory background to those reports, and ask appropriate questions of officers.
5. Have a broad range of experience, possibly in public, private, voluntary or charitable sector employment or service including self-employed, employed and voluntary positions.
6. Promotes the work of Audit Committee and areas falling under its terms of reference;
7. Have a connection with Charnwood Borough, e.g. resident, workplace, own a business etc.

Remuneration

Co-opted independent members do not receive an allowance but are entitled to claim for reasonable travelling and subsistence expenses in undertaking their role.

Means of assessment

Application form and by interview.

If you are interested in becoming an Independent Member of the Audit Committee, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please apply by completing the application form, outlining why you are interested in this opportunity and how your skills and experience relate to the role to: XXXXXXXXX

Selection of candidates will be strictly in accordance with the selection criteria and desirable additional criteria outlined in this pack and will be based on the information contained in your application only, as supported by references. It is suggested therefore that you include information on how you meet the criteria.

Your application will be acknowledged, and you will be advised as to whether you have been selected for interview or not in due course.

Please note that interviews for the role will be held on the XXXXXXXX at XXXXXXXXX

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT AS AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER
OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

1 PERSONAL DETAILS
TITLE:
FULL NAME:
HOME ADDRESS:
CONTACT TELEPHONE NO:
EMAIL:
2 Have you ever been a Councillor, co-opted member or officer of Charnwood Borough Council or a Councillor, co-opted member or officer of a parish or town council which falls within Charnwood Borough Council?
YES/NO
<i>If your answer to this question is yes, please give the date on which you ceased to be a Member or employee.</i>
3 Are you related to, or a close friend of, a member or employee of Charnwood Borough Council?
YES/NO
<i>If your answer to this question is yes, please give details below</i>
4 Are you or have you ever been a Councillor or officer of any other local authority?
YES/NO
<i>If your answer to this question is yes, please give details below.</i>
5 Are you, or have you been a member of a political party?
YES/NO
<i>If the answer to this question is yes, please give details below</i>
6 Please indicate whether there is any matter concerning your own conduct which, if it were generally known, might affect public confidence in your ability to contribute to the work of the Audit Committee.
YES/NO
<i>If your answer to this question is yes, please give details below.</i>
7 Please confirm that you are able to meet the attendance requirements of the role i.e. attending early evening meetings in person at the designated Council venue.
YES/NO

8 Please say why you wish to be considered for the post of Independent Member and what you could offer the Council. Give brief details of your experience (e.g. employment / business / professional /voluntary/ public service) and qualifications, and any other matter which you consider relevant to your suitability for appointment.

Please also explain how you meet the person specification outlined in this application pack.

References: Please give the name, address, and telephone number of two referees who are not related to you and are not members of a town or parish council within Charnwood Borough and who are able to comment on your suitability for appointment. (Your referees will be contacted without further notice to you unless you indicate to the contrary).

Referee 1

Name:	
Address	
Contact Email / Number:	

Referee 2

Name:	
Address	
Contact Email / Number	

Data Protection Act

Information from this form will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. In signing it you agree to this data being held and processed and if appointed to the position you also agree to further personal information, including sensitive data (e.g. bank details) being held and processed by Charnwood Borough Council in accordance with the Act.

DECLARATION

I wish to be considered for appointment as an Independent Member of the Audit Committee and confirm that, if appointed, I will undertake to observe the code of conduct for councillors and co-opted members of Charnwood Borough Council, as adopted by the Council.

The information which I have given is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

NAME	
DATE	

Please return the completed application form to:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX