

**Independent Member**

<b>Timetable</b>	
<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Audit Governance and Standards Committee	13 November 2023
Council	29 November 2023

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Council
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement Katherine Woodward, Head of Mid Kent Audit
<b>Classification</b>	Public report with exempt appendix  Exempt Appendix 1: Curriculum Vitae  This appendix contains exempt information as classified in paragraph 1 of part 1 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 in that it contains information relating to any individual.  The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in its disclosure.
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

**Executive Summary**

The Constitution adopted by the Council at its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023 makes provision for the co-option of an Independent Member to the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee. This report sets out a process for identifying and co-opting a suitable person to the Committee.

**Purpose of Report**

Decision.

**This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. That the Committee recommends that Council co-opt the person proposed by the selection panel as an Independent Member of the Committee.

# Independent Member

## 1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure</li> <li>• Safe, Clean and Green</li> <li>• Homes and Communities</li> <li>• A Thriving Place</li> </ul> <p>We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities.</p>	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
<b>Cross Cutting Objectives</b>	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage is Respected</li> <li>• Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced</li> <li>• Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved</li> <li>• Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected</li> </ul> <p>There will be no material impact on these objectives.</p>	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
<b>Risk Management</b>	Already covered in the risk section.	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
<b>Financial</b>	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Staffing</b>	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement

<b>Legal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The co-option of an independent member of the audit committee is authorised under the council's constitution.</li> </ul>	Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance)
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	No implications	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
<b>Equalities</b>	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities & Communities Officer
<b>Public Health</b>	No implications.	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	No implications.	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
<b>Procurement</b>	No implications.	Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement
<b>Biodiversity and Climate Change</b>	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and there are no implications on biodiversity and climate change.	Biodiversity and Climate Change Officer

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Constitution adopted by the Council at its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023 makes provision for the co-option of an Independent Member to the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee. This is in line with best practice and with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). This report describes the process of selecting an Independent Member and makes a recommendation to Council.
- 2.2 Note that the Independent Member will be in addition to the two Parish Representatives who already sit on the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee. Like the Parish Representatives, the Independent Member will not have voting rights.

- 2.3 In order to ensure that a wide range of potential candidates was alerted to the opportunity, the role was advertised on LinkedIn, PF Jobs and the Council's own website. In the end, six applications were received. A panel comprising the Chair, Vice-Chair, Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement and Head of Mid-Kent Audit reviewed the applications for the role and agreed a shortlist of four. Two candidates were interviewed in person by the Chair, the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement, the Head of Mid-Kent Audit and the Council's HR Manager, the other two candidates being unavailable for interview.
- 2.4 Both candidates seen by the panel submitted strong applications and performed well in interview. On the basis of a structured interview assessment, the panel agreed unanimously that the candidate whose curriculum vitae is included as an appendix to this report scored most strongly in relation to the requirements of the role.
- 2.5 References have been sought on the proposed candidate and confirmation (or otherwise) that these are satisfactory will be provided at the meeting of the Committee.
- 2.6 If the proposed candidate is approved by the Committee, they will be put forward for Council to agree their co-option as an Independent Member of the Committee at its meeting on 29 November.
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### **3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

#### 3.1 Option 1

The recommended candidate is put forward for approval by Council.

#### 3.2 Option 2

The recommended candidate is not put forward and the recruitment process starts again.

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### **4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 It is recommended that Option 1 is chosen. The preferred candidate has excellent experience, of considerable relevance for the Committee, and meets the requirements for the role.
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### **5. RISK**

- 5.1 The overall impact of the course of action proposed in the report is likely to be to mitigate the risks faced by the Council, in that it will add an informed and independent element to the work of the Committee.
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## **6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 6.1 The proposal to co-opt an Independent Member was considered by Democracy and General Purposes Committee prior to Council adopting the current constitution, and was generally welcomed.
- 6.2 This Committee agreed the process for selecting an Independent Member at its meeting on 24 July 2023.
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## **7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 7.1 See paragraph 2.6 above.
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## **8. REPORT APPENDICES**

- Exempt Appendix 1: Curriculum Vitae of recommended candidate
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## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.