

Independent Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee

Responsibilities

The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee will be expected to:

- a) chair at least four formal meetings of the Committee per year.
- b) create and manage effective working relationships among the Audit and Governance Committee, senior officers and internal and external auditors to support the effective governance of the CCA, working in the interests of the people of the area.
- c) take the lead in ensuring that committee members are provided with appropriate training and development to deliver their role.
- d) ensure that there is a periodic review of the overall effectiveness of the committee and its terms of reference, create an annual workplan, report to the CCA in a timely and comprehensive manner and provide advice and counsel on matters relating to the work of the Audit and Governance Committee to senior officers as well as internal and external auditors.
- e) hold pre-meeting sessions with relevant people to discuss and review agenda items and the forward plan, to prioritise the issues to be considered and to ensure that the reports appropriately address the Committee's terms of reference.

Allowance

The Independent Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee will be paid an allowance of £2000 per year. This allowance is to be reviewed by an Independent Remuneration Panel annually. The Chair may claim any travelling and subsistence expenses incurred in the course of their duties.

Person Specification

Applicants will be required to demonstrate that they have the following essential knowledge, skills and experience:

- a) Knowledge and experience of corporate governance encompassing financial, risk and performance management;
- b) Experience of effectively challenging and questioning others in committee or board meetings;
- c) Ability to understand, interpret, discuss and question complex written material, including financial and statistical information, identify the salient points and reach rational conclusions;
- d) Ability to make clear and reasoned judgements;
- e) A good communicator with excellent leadership and interpersonal skills, able to both empower and challenge supportively;
- f) Ability to lead a team, and to work with others to achieve results;

- g) Ability to treat people fairly and with respect, to recognise and acknowledge diversity and respond sensitively and constructively to difference of opinion;
- h) Ability to demonstrate political independence and impartiality;
- i) Digitally aware, with good IT skills and the ability to access reports, information and communications electronically;
- j) A commitment to act in the best interests of the Authority and the communities it serves, to abide by the seven principles of public life set out in Section # and to devote the necessary time to the role.

It would be desirable, but not essential, if the person appointed as Independent Chair were to have:

- a) Professional experience of financial, accountancy, audit or risk management processes, particularly in the public sector;
- b) Understanding of the role of internal and external audit in public bodies;
- c) Experience in reviewing internal financial controls;
- d) A relevant professional qualification relating to accountancy, auditing or governance;
- e) Experience in chairing committee or board meetings;
- f) Knowledge of the Authority's functions and priorities and the challenges facing the Authority and wider public services; and
- g) Lived, worked, studied or had a close affinity to the combined authority area

Seven Principles of Public Life

Throughout the application process and any appointment term, the Independent Chair will be expected to abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the Nolan Principles) which apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder.

- Selflessness - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- Integrity - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- Objectivity - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- Openness - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- Honesty - Holders of public office should be truthful.

- Leadership - Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

An independent person is qualified if the person:

- a. is not a member or substitute member, or officer, of the combined authority, or, as the case may be, combined county authority;
- b. is not a member, co-opted member, or officer of a principal council or parish council, whose area is within the area of the combined authority, or, as the case may be, the combined county authority;
- c. is not a relative, or close friend, of a person within sub-paragraph (a) or (b); and
- d. was not—
 - i. a member or substitute member, or officer, of the authority, or
 - ii. a member, co-opted member, or officer of a principal council or parish council, whose area is within the area of the authority,at any time during the five years ending with the date of appointment to the role of independent chair

Any person who is recommended for appointment will be required to confirm that they are qualified.