

Independent Chairman of the Audit Committee

Reporting Officer: Lloyd White, Head of Democratic Services

SUMMARY

This report seeks approval to the process to appoint a new Independent Chairman of the Audit Committee for the next 2014/15 Municipal Year. The position currently attracts a Special Responsibility Allowance of £2,845.07 p.a.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That

- a. the resignation of the present Independent Chairman of the Audit Committee be noted and a vote of thanks be given for his excellent service to the Council;**
- b. the Head of Democratic Services be instructed to co-ordinate the process to advertise and appoint a new Independent Member / Chairman of the Audit Committee as detailed below;**

INFORMATION

1. Notification has been received that the current independent Chairman of the Committee will be resigning from his position with effect from the end of the current Municipal Year. Accordingly Members' views are sought concerning the process to advertise and appoint a new Independent Chairman.
2. The Draft Local Audit Bill which is progressing through Parliament and which is based on the consultation paper "The Future of Local Audit", recommends the Chairman of an Audit Committee should be independent of the local public body.
3. Also included in the consultation paper was guidance to be followed when choosing an Independent Member of an Audit Committee, that such a person should only be considered for the position if he or she;
 - Has not been a Member or an officer of the local authority / public body within five years before the date of the appointment
 - Is not a Member or an officer of that or any other relevant authority
 - Is not a relative or a close friend of a Member or an officer of the body / authority
 - Has applied for the appointment
 - Has been approved by a majority of the Members of the council
 - Has responded to an advert for the position which has been advertised in at least one newspaper distributed in the local area and in other similar publications or on websites that the body / local authority considered appropriate

4. Following the guidance above the proposed process would be as follows:
- The position would be advertised, as suggested, within a local newspaper, on the Council website and in Hillingdon People, inviting suitably qualified persons to submit an 'expression of Interest' of no more than 300 words in length to the Head of Democratic Services
 - The deadline for submissions would be the end of February 2014.
 - An Interview Panel will be set up to shortlist (if necessary) and interview prospective candidates with a view to submitting a recommendation to the Annual Council meeting on 5 June 2014. Details of the composition of the Panel will be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

Financial Implications

The cost of this appointment is contained within the Council's draft budget for 2014/15 as part of Members' allowances.

Legal Implications

The legal implications are detailed in the body of the report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.