

COUNCIL MEETING - 13 JULY 2021

APPOINTMENT OF NON-VOTING INDEPENDENT MEMBER ON AUDIT & ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE & EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the appointment of Stuart Turner as a non-voting Independent member of the Audit & Accounts Committee.
- 1.2 To consider an extraordinary meeting of the Audit and Accounts Committee to facilitate the approval of the Statement of Accounts for the 2020/21 financial year.

2.0 Background Information

Approval of Independent Member

- 2.1 The Audit & Accounts Committee recommended to Full Council on 3 February 2021 that an Independent member be co-opted onto the Committee on a non-voting basis.
- 2.2 This decision was approved by Council on 9 March 2021, post which a recruitment process was conducted.
- 2.3 A panel was formed to conduct the interviews; consisting of the Chair of the Committee – Councillor Mrs S. Michael, another Member of the Committee - Councillor B. Crowe supported by the Business Manager – Financial Services.
- 2.4 The Council received one application and on assessment of the application it was decided to interview that candidate.
- 2.5 The panel met and interviewed the candidate on 20 April 2021. It was considered that the candidate had the required knowledge and skills to provide the support and appropriate challenge when scrutinising reports that are considered by the Committee.
- 2.6 It is therefore proposed that the candidate, Stuart Turner is appointed as the non-voting Independent member of the Audit & Accounts Committee. This position will be reviewed annually to ensure that both parties are content to continue the arrangements.

Extraordinary Meeting of the Audit & Accounts Committee

- 2.7 As a result of the pandemic, over the course of the last 15 months, an amendment to the Audit and Accounts Regulations (2015) was consulted on by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, in order to extend the deadline for the publication of the draft accounts and the completion of the external audit.
- 2.8 The conclusion of the consultation was such that the draft set of accounts should be published on or before the 1 August 2021, with the audited accounts to be approved and published by 30 September 2021.

- 2.9 The Audit & Accounts Committee is the Committee that is delegated with responsibility to approve the annual Statement of Accounts as per the Council's Constitution. Currently there are Committee dates scheduled for the 28 July 2021 and 1 December 2021.
- 2.10 The audit of the accounts is currently underway, but will not be completed in time for the 28 July 2021 Committee, therefore it is suggested that an extraordinary meeting be scheduled during September 2021 in order to facilitate the approval of the accounts and subsequent publication by the 30 September 2021 in order to comply with the new timetable.
- 2.11 It is proposed that the date for the meeting be set as the 22 September 2021 to fall in line with the current week day for the Committee of a Wednesday. This will then ensure that the relevant work post the Committee approval can be completed by the Council's external auditors Mazars, and the Council in order to facilitate the publication by the 30 September 2021.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (a) the appointment of Stuart Turner to the position of non-voting Independent member on the Audit & Accounts Committee be approved; and**
- (b) an extraordinary meeting of the Audit & Accounts meeting be scheduled for the 22 September 2021.**

Background Papers

Nil.

For further information please contact Nick Wilson on Ext. 5317.

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