

Divisions affected – All

COUNCIL

8 JULY 2025

**APPOINTMENTS OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE AUDIT AND
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Report of the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Council is RECOMMENDED to:-**

- a) confirm the appointment Kate Cartwright and Paul McGinn as Independent Members of the Audit and Governance Committee for a term of four years.
- b) record the Council's gratitude and appreciation for the contribution of Dr Geoff Jones as Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee and Chair of the Audit Working Group.

Independent Members of the Audit and Governance Committee

- 2. At its meeting on 11 July 2023, Council approved the creation of the roles of two Independent Members of the Audit and Governance Committee. It was agreed that Dr Geoff Jones would continue as Independent Member until the new positions were filled and would then step down following a period of transition to the two new Independent Members. Council is recommended to record its thanks to Dr Geoff Jones for his contribution to the work of the Audit and Governance Committee during the past 13 years.
- 3. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance recommends that local authority audit committees should include at least two co-opted independent members. Interviews for both positions were held on 30 June 2025. The interviews were conducted by the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, Councillor Roz Smith, the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer and the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer. Following completion of the recruitment process Kate Cartwright and Paul McGinn were selected to be appointed.
- 4. Independent Members are an important part of the corporate governance assurance framework. They should bring knowledge and skills relating to

accounting, budget management, risk and control that are complementary to the elected members on the committee.

5. Independent Members do not have a vote in the same way as elected members on the committee. They are at meetings in an advisory and consultative capacity and are fully involved in the discussions on all the matters considered by the committee.
6. There are six formal meetings of the Audit and Governance Committee each year. The Independent Members will be expected to attend these meetings and participate at working group meetings and training sessions as appropriate. In order to undertake the role effectively they will need to make time to read meeting papers and undertake background reading as necessary.
7. An annual allowance of £3,156 is currently paid for each of the Independent Members to reflect the significance of the role. This amount was recommended by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel in July 2023. This allowance will be included in the review of all allowances due to take place in this municipal year 2025-2026 following which a new Scheme of Allowances effective from 1 April 2026 will be recommended to Council for approval .
8. Independent Members cannot be drawn from people who have served as elected members or employees of Oxfordshire County Council within the last five years.

Corporate policies and priorities

9. Independent Members of the Audit and Governance Committee are an important part of the corporate governance assurance framework.

Financial implications

10. The 2025-26 Revenue Budget includes sufficient funds for the payment of allowances to the Independent Members of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Comments checked by Tom James, Head of Financial Services

Legal implications

11. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by Kim Sawyer, Interim Head of Legal and Governance

Employee implications

12. No direct implications affecting employees

Equality and inclusion implications

Local residents of all backgrounds, including those from minority and protected characteristic groups, are **actively encouraged to apply for co-opted positions** at the Council. The Council is **committed to removing any barriers** related to personal background or experience and will provide **reasonable adjustments** as needed to ensure **fair, inclusive access** to these roles, reflecting the **diversity of the communities we serve**. This approach aligns with the Council's public sector equality duties to *advance equality of opportunity* between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not, ensuring no group is disadvantaged in participating in local governance.

Anita Bradley

Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

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Annex – Role description for Independent Member of audit and Governance Committee

