

Audit Committee

Appointment of an Independent Member

Application Pack

November 2022



AUDIT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED INDEPENDENT MEMBERS
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This application pack includes;

- Background to Shropshire Council
- The Council's Audit Committee
- Applicant Information; role description and role specification
- Shropshire Council Member's Code of Conduct
- Application Process

Expectations of applicants

The Council is currently recruiting for a co-opted independent member of the Audit Committee.

The successful applicant will need to be available to attend approximately five meetings of the Committee in any year and any associated training and development events. We expect that applicants will need to be able to attend a combination of virtual and physical meetings. Applicants will need to be contactable throughout the year. The appointment will be made for four years.

Applicants must disclose to the Council any matter that might damage the reputation of the Council or indicate a real or perceived conflict of interest with the role of the Audit Committee.

Previous experience of audit committees may be helpful but is not essential.

Co-opted independent members should not be (or have been, within the last three years) an Elected Member or employee of Shropshire Council; or any of its wholly owned companies.

Co-opted independent members should not be (or have been, within the last five years) a Councillor/Elected Member with any other Local Authority (including town or parish councils).

Co-opted independent members should not be affiliated with any political party, or have been affiliated, within the last five years.

The council seeks to reflect and represent all its residents and welcomes applications from the Shropshire community. The successful candidate will be resident in the Shropshire area.

The co-opted independent member is not a job vacancy; should you be appointed you will not be an employee of the Council. The successful applicant will receive specific training to enable them to undertake their new role effectively.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 11 January 2023

OFFICIAL

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

Background

Shropshire Council was established in April 2009 as part of the structural changes to local government in England. The Council is responsible for, amongst other things, maintaining the roads, providing transport services, commissioning school places and specialist support services for vulnerable children and their families, educating children, providing social care to elderly and vulnerable people and looking after waste and recycling.

Shropshire Council's vision is 'Shropshire Living the Best Life'. Our elected members have a pivotal role in bringing about improvements to the quality of life of people living in the County. They do this by making decisions, delivering change, challenging and scrutinising proposed actions and taking up issues raised with them by their constituents.

THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Audit Committee is a key component of the Council's arrangements to support good governance at Shropshire Council. It provides

- i. an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards;
- ii. independent review of the Council's governance, risk management, control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes; and
- iii. promotes high standards of ethical behaviour by developing, maintaining and monitoring Codes of Conduct for Councillors and co-opted Members (including other persons acting in a similar capacity).

The Audit Committee, like all of the Council's Committees, must be politically balanced. However, the success of the Audit Committee depends upon its ability to remain apolitical. It must adopt a non-political approach to its meetings and discussions at all times.

OFFICIAL

The co-option of independent members will help to bring additional knowledge and expertise to the committee and also reinforce its political neutrality and independence.

Co-opted members to Council committees are not members of the Council itself, therefore other than in limited circumstances (for example, an advisory committee established under s102(4) Local Government Act 1972) they have no voting rights. Co-opted members would instead be consulted during committee meetings and their views taken into account by voting members of the committee.

Where the Council has delegated to the Committee decisions such as the adoption of financial statements, the independent member should not be able to vote on those matters.

The detailed functions in respect of governance, risk and control; internal audit; external audit; financial reporting; accountability arrangements; related functions and standards arrangements can be found in the Council's [Constitution](#).

INDEPENDENT MEMBER ROLE PROFILE

1. To promote and support the good governance of the Council and its affairs
2. To promote and support open and transparent government
3. To provide support and encouragement to new Councillors
4. To be committed to the values of the Council, set out in our [Shropshire Plan](#)
5. To be committed to the values expected of those in public office, established in the Seven Principles of Public Life:
 - Selflessness
 - Integrity
 - Objectively
 - Accountability
 - Openness
 - Honesty
 - Leadership

INDEPENDENT MEMBER PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate the following

1. Good advocacy skills: able to present relevant and well-reasoned arguments, and provide effective and constructive challenge
2. Ability to set aside own views and always remain open-minded, objective, and impartial and act with integrity
3. Ability to analyse, interpret and absorb information and evidence effectively and quickly
4. Good communication and interpersonal skills; a confident public speaker

5. Ability and willingness to challenge ideas and contribute positively to policy development
6. Understanding the role of officers, members and other agencies and ability to have constructive and challenging dialogue with other Members and Officers
7. Respect for, and desire to work with different groups and individuals with a commitment to supporting continual improvement and development within the Council
8. Practical experience in financial management/accountancy within the public or private sector
9. Understanding and compliance with confidentiality requirements

Demonstrating the following would be desirable:

10. Knowledge and understanding of meeting law, rules and conventions
11. Understanding of delegated powers
12. Understanding of strategic, policy and service contexts for decisions, focusing on material issues
13. Knowledge of and commitment to the values of the Council
14. An understanding of the roles and purpose of Internal and External Audit

BEHAVIOUR and CODE OF CONDUCT

Whilst operating as a member of the Audit Committee, co-opted independent members are expected to follow the Nolan Principles of Standards in Public Life, which form the basis of the elected Member's Code of Conduct.

For information, a copy of the current code of conduct can be found here;

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/ecSDDisplay.aspx?ID=416&RPID=519353511>

APPLICATION PROCESS

Closing Date

The closing date for receipt of applications is Wednesday 11 January 2023

Please submit your application form to:

Assistant Director of Legal & Governance
Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY2 6ND

Or tim.collard@shropshire.gov.uk

Selection of candidates will be strictly in accordance with the role description and role specification outlined in this pack and will be based on the information contained in your application only, as supported by references.

Acknowledgements

Your application will be acknowledged, and you will be advised as to whether you have been selected for interview or not in due course.

Selection

Short listing for this appointment will be based upon an assessment of how applicants meet the criteria in the 'Person Specification' as evidenced by the application.

It is suggested therefore that you include information on how you meet the criteria.

The Interview Panel may include both Members and officers of the Council.

Referees

Please note that your two referees will be contacted without further notice to you unless you indicate to the contrary.

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT AS AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER
OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

TITLE :

FULL NAME:

HOME ADDRESS:

CONTACT TELEPHONE NO:

EMAIL:

2. Have you ever been a Councillor, co-opted member or officer of Shropshire Council or a Councillor, co-opted member or officer of a parish or town council which falls within Shropshire?

YES/NO

If your answer to this question is yes, please give the date on which you ceased to Member or employee.

3. Are you related to, or a close friend of, a member or employee of Shropshire Council?

YES/NO

If your answer to this question is yes, please give details below

4. Are you, or have you been a member of a political party?

YES/NO

If the answer to this question is yes, please give details below

5. Please indicate whether there is any matter concerning your own conduct which, if it were generally known, might affect public confidence in your ability to contribute to the work of the Audit Committee.

6. Please confirm that you are able to meet the attendance requirements of the role i.e. attending ad hoc meetings (called at short notice) at Council venues or by way of video conference.

7. Please say why you wish to be considered for the post of Independent Member and what you could offer the Council. Give brief details of your experience (e.g. employment/business/professional/voluntary/public service) and qualifications, and any other matter which you consider relevant to your suitability for appointment. Please also explain how you meet the role profile and person specification outlined in the application pack.

continue on a separate sheet if required

8. References: Please give the name, address, and telephone number of two referees who are not related to you and are not members of a borough/town or parish council within Shropshire and who are able to comment on your suitability for appointment. (Your referees will be contacted without further notice to you, unless you indicate to the contrary).

Referee 1

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Referee 2

Name:

Address

Telephone Number

Data Protection Act

Information from this form will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. In signing it you agree to this data being held and processed and if appointed to the position you also agree to further personal information, including sensitive data (e.g. bank details) being held and processed by Cheshire East Council in accordance with the Act.

DECLARATION	
<p>I wish to be considered for appointment as an Independent Member of the Audit Committee and confirm that, if appointed, I will undertake to observe the code of conduct for councillors and co-opted members of Shropshire Council, as adopted by the Council.</p> <p>The information which I have given is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.</p>	
SIGNATURE	
DATE	

Please return the completed application form to:

Assistant Director of Legal & Governance
 Shropshire Council
 Shirehall
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 Shrewsbury
 Shropshire
 SY2 6ND

Or tim.collard@shropshire.gov.uk

Deadline for receipt of applications: 11 January 2023