



Doncaster Council

Report

28th April 2022

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
n/a	n/a	No

To the Chair and Members of the AUDIT COMMITTEE

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER TO THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report seeks the Audit Committee's agreement to recommend to the Full Council that it gives approval to appoint Dr Stuart Green for a 4 years period as the Council's co-opted, non-voting, independent member to sit on the Audit Committee. Dr Stuart Green is an Assistant Professor in Accounting in the Business School of Durham University and is CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and ICEAW (Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales) qualified in addition to Doctorates and Higher Doctorates in Accounting. He also holds independent non-executive director positions on the audit, remuneration and standards committees of several large public sector organisations.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. The report does not contain exempt information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. The Audit Committee is asked
 - a. To recommend that Full Council agrees the appointment of Dr Stuart Green as the co-opted, non-voting, Independent Member to sit on the Audit Committee for a 4 year term to 31st May 2026 and
 - b. To express its gratitude to Kathryn Smart as its outgoing Independent Member, for the eight years of highly valued guidance and support she has given the committee.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. The appointment of a co-opted member to the Audit Committee is not a statutory requirement. It is, however, in line with CIPFA best practice to have an independent person with a financial background and expertise in some areas of the roles and responsibilities of an Audit Committee. The person appointed will provide external robust challenge to the work of the committee which adds value to the Council operations in managing its risks and achieving its key priorities of improving services provided to the citizens of the borough. The work undertaken by the Audit Committee also improves and strengthens governance arrangements within the Council and its partners.

BACKGROUND

5. At the Annual meeting of Council on 13 June 2014, Council agreed to appoint one co-opted, non-voting, independent member to sit on the Audit Committee. Kathryn Smart was appointed following interviews to this position. Kathryn served a second term which comes to an end on 31st May 2022 and does not wish to serve a third term.
6. Accordingly the position was advertised and interviews were held in on 1st April 2022 by a panel comprising the Chair of the Audit Committee (Council Austin White), Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee (Councillor Glenn Bluff, supported by the outgoing Independent Member, (Kathryn Smart) and the Head of Internal Audit (Peter Jackson). The panel recommended Dr Stuart Green be appointed to this position.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REASON FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

7. Kathryn Smart's term will expire in May 2022. The Council can either carry out another recruitment process for a co-opted, non-voting independent member to sit on the audit committee, or it can leave the position vacant.
8. Kathryn brought a wealth of experience and knowledge on audit, finance and governance matters to the Audit Committee over her eight year term and has performed the role of co-opted, non-voting Independent Member diligently and has been highly regarded by both Members and Officers. Members of the Audit Committee have confirmed they appreciated the added value and support that the Independent Member brings and therefore approved the recruitment to reappoint to the position
9. It is therefore proposed that Doctor Stuart Green be appointed for a 4 years term, to 31st May 2026.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

10.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	

	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>The reappointment of a co-opted, non-voting, independent member to sit on the Audit Committee will enhance the work of the Committee and bring an external robust challenge to its activities.</p> <p>Effective oversight through the Audit Committee adds value to the Council operations in managing its risks and achieving its key priorities of improving services provided to the citizens of the borough</p> <p>The work undertaken by the Audit Committee improves and strengthens governance arrangements within the Council and its partners.</p>

RISKS & ASSUMPTIONS

11. There are no identified risks associated with this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (Initials: SRF Date: 07.04.22)

12. The appointment of a co-opted member to the Audit Committee is not a statutory requirement. The Council has chosen to appoint a co-opted, non-voting independent member as a means of bringing an independent, objective perspective to the audit and governance work of this Committee which is in line with CIPFA guidance.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (Initials: SJT Date:13.04.22)

13. A co-optees' allowance of £673 per annum is currently payable to any co-opted member sitting on the Council's Committees in accordance with the Members' Allowance Scheme. This is met from existing provision in the Members' Allowances budget.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Initials: SH Date:12.04.22)

14. The individual referred to in this report is not being appointed as an employee of the council therefore, there are no specific human resources implications related to the content of this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS (Initials: PW Date:12.04.22)

15. There are no technology implications associated with this report.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS (Initials: PRJ Date: 07.04.22)

16. We are aware of the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equalities Duties and there are no identified equal opportunity issues within this report

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS (Initials: RS Date:12.04.22)

17. There are no direct health implications of this report. However good governance, including having an effective audit committee is integral to improving health and wellbeing of local people.

CONSULTATION

18. Recruitment for the position of the Independent Member was proposed following consultation with members of the Audit Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

19. None

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

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