

NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL

VACANCY FOR INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

The role of the Independent Member

To independently assist the council to discharge their powers and functions as set out in the terms of reference of the Audit Committee.

You will be one of four independent members on Audit Committee alongside five councillors. One of the independent members will be appointed as the Chair.

There is currently one vacancy for an independent member of the Council's Audit Committee, for which an annual allowance of £878 will be paid in monthly instalments. The length of the term of office will be determined on appointment.

The estimated time commitment required to undertake the role can vary, on average it would involve attendance at five daytime meetings of between one - three hours per year plus associated preparatory reading. You can get an idea of the work of the Audit Committee by following the link below:

<http://democracy.newcastle.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=188&Year=0>

You will not be employed by Newcastle City Council. If you are appointed as an independent member on any other committee, the second allowance will be paid at 50%.

The function of the Audit Committee

The Council's Audit Committee is responsible for ensuring the Council's systems of governance and internal control are effective and that internal audit operates in accordance with agreed procedures.

1. To act as the principal advisory committee to the Council and the Cabinet to provide independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting and annual governance processes
2. In particular, to consider and analyse the following functions in relation to audit, risk and governance issues and to advise the Council and Cabinet, and their respective Committees and officers upon such other financial matters as and when it considers it necessary:
 - To be satisfied that the authority's assurance statements, including the Annual Governance Statement, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it, and demonstrate how governance supports the achievements of the authority's objectives.

- In relation to the internal audit function oversees its independence, objectivity, performance and professionalism, support the effectiveness of the internal audit, and promote the effective use of internal audit within the assurance framework.
- Considers the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements and the control environment. Review the risk profile of the organisation and assurances that action is being taken on risk-related issues, including partnerships with other organisations.
- Monitors the effectiveness of the control environment, including arrangements for ensuring value for money and productivity, the robustness of mechanisms to deliver strategic objectives, particularly in a changing environment, and for managing the authority's exposure to the risks of fraud and corruption.
- Considers the reports and recommendations of external audit and inspection agencies and their implications for governance, risk management or control.
- Supports effective relationships between external audit and internal audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and encourage the active promotion of the value of the audit process.
- Reviews the financial statements, external auditor's opinion and reports to members, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit.

3. To liaise with, have access to and receive advice and information from other Committees, officers of the Council and the Council's external auditors and/or inspectors as is necessary to achieve the above objectives.

Person Specification

Experience	Working to high standard of behaviour, demonstrating honesty, probity and the highest level of integrity in conduct.	Essential
	Knowledge / experience in matters of an audit nature.	Essential
	Knowledge / experience of risk management, performance management and corporate and financial governance and controls.	Essential
	Decision making role in some previous (not necessarily management) employment.	Essential

	Experience gained working in or with a large, or public sector, organisation. Serving on a Committee or Board	Essential Essential
Skills	<p>Analytical skills including the ability to weigh / sort complex evidence and reach rational conclusions, incorporating appropriate advice.</p> <p>Ability to be objective, independent and impartial.</p> <p>Ability to work as part of a team, and chair meetings if necessary.</p> <p>Ability to make clear and reasoned decisions.</p> <p>Strong strategic awareness and ability to identify emerging external factors that may impact on strategy, implementation of plans, or reputation with key stakeholders.</p> <p>A good communicator with excellent leadership and interpersonal skills, able to both empower and challenge supportively.</p> <p>Ability to challenge and hold to account Council Officers and representatives of internal and external audit</p> <p>Digitally aware, with good IT skills and the ability to access reports, information and communication electronically.</p>	<p>Essential</p> <p>Essential</p> <p>Essential</p> <p>Essential</p> <p>Essential</p> <p>Essential</p> <p>Desirable</p>
Knowledge	<p>Knowledge of the challenges facing Newcastle City Council and wider public services and understanding of its communities.</p> <p>Knowledge of the major functions of Newcastle City Council.</p> <p>Knowledge of the Newcastle City Council's vision and priorities.</p>	<p>Essential</p> <p>Desirable</p> <p>Desirable</p>

	Understanding of the complexity of issues surrounding audit, finance and risk management in local government.	Desirable
	Understanding of Committee procedures.	Desirable
	Understanding of the role of internal and external audit.	Desirable
	Awareness of the risks of fraud and the controls to limit fraud.	Desirable
Other	Qualified auditor/accountant	Desirable
	Be over 18.	Essential
	Live in, work in or have close affinity to the area.	Essential
	Commitment to the needs of the local community.	Essential
	Affinity with the values of public service.	Essential
	Must have no personal, legal or contractual relationship with Newcastle City Council (including employees or members or former staff), or any other relationship / activity which might represent a conflict of interest.	Essential
	Able and willing to devote the necessary time to the role.	Essential
	Candidates should be able to demonstrate their political independence.	Essential

Disqualifications

You cannot be considered for appointment if you:-

- Have been an employee or elected Member of the Council in the last five years;
- Are a relative or close friend of an employee or Member of the Council;
- Are an employee or Member of the council another local authority
- In addition to be eligible for appointment, a person must not be disqualified from holding office as a member of the Local Authority. Accordingly, any person who is recommended for appointment will be required to confirm that he/she is not disqualified.

Application process

- To apply, please submit a recent CV and a covering letter demonstrating how you meet each of the criteria in the Person Specification set out above and send to: linda.scott@newcastle.gov.uk by 12noon on Monday 30 April 2018. Please also include the contact details of two referees.
- If you would like a discussion about the role of Independent Member then please contact Linda Scott on the email address above or on 0191 211 5159.