

REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

A. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Introduction

1. This report concerns the appointment of independent members to the Council's Corporate Governance Committee.

Background

2. The Constitution Committee has amongst its responsibilities that of advertising and interviewing candidates for recommendation to the County Council for appointment as an independent member of the Corporate Governance Committee. The Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee is also to be involved in this process in line with CIPFA (the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Guidance following a public advertisement and interviews.
3. Guidance issued by CIPFA recommends that local authorities include two co-opted independent members on their audit committee to supplement the knowledge and experience of elected members in specific areas such as finance and audit, provide continuity outside the political cycle (this being of particular importance where members of the committee can change annually or because of elections) and to help achieve a non-political focus on governance, risk and control matters.
4. Whilst it could be some time before the relevant statute is enacted to support this approach the Government has encouraged local authorities to establish their audit committee arrangements in line with this guidance.
5. Independent members are non-elected representatives that will not be able to vote on matters like elected members of the Committee but will be part of the Committee in an advisory and consultative capacity. They are to be recruited based on the suitability of their qualifications and experience in the area of audit and/or governance and should provide:
 - Specialist knowledge and insight to the workings and deliberations of the committee;
 - An effective, independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework;
 - An independent review of the Council's financial and non-financial performance;
 - Independent challenge to, and assurance over, the Council's internal control framework and wider governance processes.

6. The positions were advertised within the County and four applications were received, two of which were shortlisted for interview.

Consideration by the Constitution Committee

7. The Constitution Committee with the Chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee met on 15 May 2023 to interview the shortlisted candidates and decided to recommend the following people for appointment:

Mr G. Grimes
Mr A. Maxfield

8. Mr Grimes is a former civil servant having specialised in operational management, corporate governance and change management and process re-engineering at both an operational and strategic level. Since the introduction of the revised standards regime following the 2011 Localism Act, he has also been appointed (and reappointed in most cases) as an independent person for 11 authorities in Leicestershire, Rutland and Lincolnshire. Mr Alec Maxfield is an experienced governance professional across public and private sector settings. He is currently Head of Governance and Assurance at the Manufacturing Technology Centre, setting corporate policy and providing advice on all matters of governance.

Resource Implications

9. There are no resource implications arising from this report.

Equality Implications

10. None.

Human Rights Implications

11. None.

(Motion to be moved: -

That Mr G. Grimes and Mr A. Maxfield be appointed to serve as independent members of the Corporate Governance Committee for a term of two years up to the May annual Council meeting in 2025.)

15th May 2023

**Mr N. J. Rushton
Chairman**