
Appointment of a Selection Committee for the External Members of the Audit and Risk Committee

Report by Chief Officer Audit and Risk

Scottish Borders Council

7 October 2015

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to gain approval to the appointment of a Selection Committee for the purpose of interviewing, selecting and appointing persons for the positions of external member of the Audit and Risk Committee.**
- 1.2 Scottish Borders Council has had two external members on its Audit and Risk Committee since 2002 to improve independence and objectivity and to ensure that the Audit and Risk Committee's role in the scrutiny process will be robust. The independence of the Audit and Risk Committee has been recognised by external inspection agencies over the years most notably within the Best Value reports on Scottish Borders Council.
- 1.3 The appointment of the existing external members of the Audit and Risk Committee will end on 31 October 2015. There is currently one vacancy and a formal recruitment process is underway. The one existing external member has indicated his interest in being re-appointed. The appointment of external members of the Audit and Risk Committee will be for a fixed period to 31 October 2018.
- 1.4 Approval is sought for the appointment of a Selection Committee for the purpose of interviewing, selecting and appointing persons as external members of the Audit and Risk Committee.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Council appoints a Selection Committee, comprising the Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee, the Convener, and the Depute Leader (Finance), for the purpose of interviewing, selecting and appointing persons as external members of the Audit and Risk Committee.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2002, the Council decided that the membership of the Audit and Risk Committee should include somebody who was completely independent of the Council to provide it with expert finance/business advice. As a result of an external advertising and recruitment process in July 2002 and the high calibre of applicants, the selection panel gained approval at the meeting of Scottish Borders Council on 23 July 2002 to having two external representatives on the Audit and Risk Committee and the appointments were made.
- 3.2 Since then the appointments of the two external members of the Audit and Risk Committee have been made on a regular basis to enable continuity of membership. The independence of the Audit and Risk Committee has been recognised by external inspection agencies over the years most notably within the Best Value reports on Scottish Borders Council.
- 3.3 The appointment of the existing external members of the Audit and Risk Committee will end on 31 October 2015. There is currently one vacancy since Mr Gerald Tait's last meeting as external member on the Audit and Risk Committee was 23 March 2015 having served as an external member of the Audit and Risk Committee for 2 ½ years. The one existing external member, Mr David Gwyther, who has served as an external member of the Audit and Risk Committee for 3 years, has indicated his interest in being re-appointed.
- 3.4 The Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting on 11 May 2015 noted the procedure for appointment of non-voting members of the Audit and Risk Committee. A formal recruitment process is underway with the publication of the advert for the vacant role being distributed widely within the community and across the Council's partner organisations. The appointment will be for a fixed period to 31 October 2018. The proposal is that a Selection Committee be appointed for the purpose of interviewing, selecting and appointing persons as external members of the Audit and Risk Committee.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the Selection Committee has the following membership:
- Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee
 - The Convener
 - The Deputy Leader (Finance)
- 3.6 The Selection Committee will consult with and be advised by the Chief Officer Audit and Risk.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

The appointment to the role of external member of the Audit and Risk Committee is on a voluntary basis, although travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) There is a risk that if the Council does not approve the proposal in this report for the appointment of the Selection Committee, this may delay the recruitment and appointment process of the external members of the Audit and Risk Committee.
- (b) There is a risk that there will be no suitable candidates in the current recruitment process and the Selection Committee will be unable to

make an appointment to the positions of external member of the Audit and Risk Committee. The one existing external member, Mr David Gwyther, has indicated his interest in being re-appointed and the publication of the advert for the one vacant role of external member of the Audit and Risk Committee has been distributed widely within the community and across the Council's partner organisations.

4.3 **Equalities**

Equalities and diversities matters will be taken into account by the Selection Committee when interviewing and considering their selection and appointment to the positions of external member of the Audit and Risk Committee.

4.4 **Acting Sustainably**

There are no direct economic, social or environmental issues with this report.

4.5 **Carbon Management**

There are no direct carbon emissions impacts as a result of this report.

4.6 **Rural Proofing**

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

4.7 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

No changes to the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation are required as a result of this report.

5 **CONSULTATION**

5.1 The Corporate Management Team has been consulted on this report and any comments received have been taken into account.

5.2 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Officer HR, and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted on this report and any comments received have been taken into account.

Approved by

Jill Stacey, Chief Officer Audit and Risk Signature

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Background Papers:

Previous Minute Reference: Audit and Risk Committee 11 May 2015

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