

Report to Audit and Governance Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference:

Date of meeting:

28 November 2013

Chairman: Councillor A Watts

Subject: Appointment of Co-opted Member

Responsible Officer: I Willett (01992 564243)

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations:

- (1) To note the decision of the Appointments Panel appointed by the Council to select Mr A Jarvis of Chigwell to fill the vacancy for a co-opted member on this Committee with effect from 26 September 2013; and**
- (2) That a report be submitted to the Council notifying the Council of this appointment which was made under delegated authority.**

Executive Summary:

An interview panel of 3 councillors was appointed at the Council meeting on 30 July 2013 to undertake interviews following public advertisement for the vacant co-opted member position on the Audit and Governance Committee. The Council granted delegated authority to the panel to appoint a preferred candidate following interviews.

This report gives information on the recruitment process and reports that Mr A Jarvis of Chigwell was appointed.

Reason for Proposed Decision:

To fill the vacancy for a co-opted member on the Audit and Governance Committee and to comply with the delegated authority granted to the interview panel by the Council at its July meeting.

Other Options for Action

None

Report:

Introduction

1. At the Council meeting on 30 July 2013, an interview panel of 3 councillors together with Mr R Thompson, co-opted member of the Audit and Governance Committee (in a non voting capacity) was appointed with the view to making an appointment to the vacancy on the Committee.
2. The panel comprised Councillor Anthony Watts (who chaired the panel) together with Councillor Helen Kane and Lance Leonard. The Panel was supported by Brian Bassington (Chief Internal Auditor), Bob Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT) and Ian Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive).

Recruitment Process

3. The vacancy was advertised on the Council's website and in the summer/autumn edition of the Forester a recruitment pack made available to potential applicants. Details of the pack and the vacancy were also circulated via the Council's local business and voluntary sector network. The closing date for applications was set as 31 August 2013.
4. This advertising resulted in 12 persons contacting the Council to request a recruitment pack and 4 firm applications. Two other applicants sought advice on whether they were eligible for consideration and in both cases after informal consultations with panel members these were ruled out on the basis of past political links with the Council or experience which did not match the selection criteria adopted for the position.

Interviews

5. Interviews were held on two occasions in September 2013 linked to the availability of candidates and the diaries of the panel members. The four candidates were selected for interview but one withdrew due to pressure of other commitments.
6. All interviews were conducted by the panel on the basis of set questions within which there was flexibility for the panel to follow up on topics which arose in discussion. The set questions were allocated between Panel members and were linked to the selection criteria. Candidates were given an opportunity to ask questions of their own about the Council and the work of the Audit and Governance Committee. Applicants were scored against the selection criteria and the result was clear-cut.
7. The successful candidate was selected on the basis of considerable experience in local government finance over an extended period which was considered to be stronger than those of the other 2 candidates. The Panel is keen to record its thanks to the other 2 candidates for their interest and their enthusiasm.

Conclusions

8. Mr Jarvis's appointment took effect from 26 September 2013 and the Panel took the view that his knowledge and experience will be an asset to both the Committee and the Council.
9. We ask the Committee to note the appointment made and to draw this to the attention of the Council at its December meeting.

Resource Implications:

The recruitment and interviewing arrangements were conducted within existing resources.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Audit and Governance Committee is a requirement of the Council's Constitution and the appointment to the vacancy for a co-opted member ensures that the Committee can carry out its tasks in accordance with those requirements.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

None.

Consultation Undertaken:

The set questions and the scoring matrix was agreed after consultation with the Panel members.

Background Papers:

Recruitment pack
Set Questions and Scoring Framework.

Impact Assessments:**Risk Management:**

With only 1 co-opted member in post, there was a risk of the Committee not being quorate if the remaining co-opted member were absent for any reason. The appointment of the second co-opted member reduces the risk of being inquorate in the future.

Equality Analysis:

Details of the appointment were circulated widely across the District. The selection criteria sought a residential or employment link with the District and excluded candidates who had political or other links with the council so as to guarantee independence. Specific knowledge and experience relevant to the work of the Committee was sought.

