

Governance and Audit

Independent Member – Recruitment Pack

This information pack is for individuals that are interested in becoming a co-opted Independent Member of South Holland District Council’s Governance and Audit Committee	
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Section 1- Welcome letter to potential applicants

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in becoming a co-opted Independent Member of South Holland District Council's Governance and Audit Committee.

The committee is a key component of South Holland's corporate governance arrangements. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards. The Committee's Terms of Reference are included in Section 5 of this pack

The Committee is looking for two committed individuals to serve as co-opted Independent Members from XXXXX for a four-year term.

In considering your application you should be aware that the typical commitment required from an Independent Member is expected to include preparation time and attendance at 5 committee meetings per annum as well as further ad hoc meetings and attendance at training and development sessions.

Committee meetings are held at South Holland District Council's Offices during the evening. Independent Members are able to claim reasonable travel expenses and a fixed allowance of £650 per annum is payable. All Committee Members receive an induction and other appropriate training.

The closing date for applications is xxx. Applications should be submitted to xxx

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for interview on xxx

You will note that the application form asks for details of two referees. We will take up references for shortlisted candidates, prior to interview. If you would not wish us to contact your referees at that stage then please indicate this on your application.

The Council has a commitment to equal opportunities and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community.

If you wish to discuss any aspect in more detail please contact TBC or email TBC

Section 2 - The Governance and Audit Committee and role of the Independent Member

The role of the Governance and Audit Committee is central to the governance, internal control, compliance and risk aspects of the operation of a local authority. The work of Committee includes:

- Approval of the Council's Financial Statements and Annual Governance Statement
- Consideration of internal and external audit reports
- Reviewing the effectiveness of risk management
- Monitoring delivery and reviewing of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy

Further details of the work of the Committee are available publicly on the Council's website. [Browse meetings - Governance and Audit Committee - South Holland District Council \(sholland.gov.uk\)](https://www.sholland.gov.uk/governance-and-audit-committee)

The aim of the Independent Member is to bring a fresh and objective viewpoint to the work of the Governance and Audit Committee and support the Committee to carry out their work. Having an independent voice with the appropriate background knowledge and skills is advocated by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) in their Audit Committee Guidance.

Specifically, an Independent Member serves as a non-voting co-opted member of the Council's Governance and Audit Committee, with the following responsibilities:

1. To attend and participate in meetings of the Committee and training/development days.
2. To engage fully in collective consideration of the issues before the Governance and Audit Committee, taking into account a full range of relevant factors, including legislation and supporting regulations, professional guidance (e.g. that issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)), and the advice of the Council's Officers and Auditors.
3. To participate fully in the discharge of all Governance and Audit Committee's functions, as set out in the Committee's terms of reference and the constitution.
4. To promote and champion the work of Internal and External Audit and the Committee.
5. To participate in periodic reviews of the overall effectiveness of the Committee, and of its terms of reference.

6. To promote high standards of conduct and integrity, complying with the Council's Member Code of Conduct at all times.

Section 3 - Person Specification

Candidates should demonstrate in their application form how they meet the following competencies which are relevant to this role:

- Ability to be objective, independent and impartial when undertaking the role.
- Good understanding of the roles of:
 - internal/external audit,
 - risk management,
 - corporate and financial governance.
- High behavioural standards, demonstrating honesty and the highest level of integrity in their conduct.
- Experience of participating in a Committee or similar meetings.
- Experience of working at a management level within a complex commercial or public sector organisation, or equivalent experience.
- A basic understanding of the wider local government environment and accountability structures.
- Ability to understand complex issues and reach objective, evidence-based conclusions and decisions.
- Strong strategic awareness and ability to identify emerging external factors that may impact on strategy, implementation of plans, or reputation with key stakeholders.
- Strong communication and excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to challenge in a constructive manner.
- Ability to devote the necessary time to the role.
- A wish to serve the local community and uphold local democracy.

Section 4 - Eligibility for Appointment

A person cannot be appointed as an Independent Member if any of the following criteria apply:

1. Are currently or have been (within the last five years) a councillor or an employee of South Holland District Council.
2. Are closely associated with anyone who is now, or has been in the last five years, a Councillor or employee of South Holland District Council.
3. Holds any political office, belongs to a political party; or is or has been politically active in the last five years.
4. Has any dealings with the Council, which could be seen to be prejudicial to a person's independence or represent a conflict of interest.
5. Are subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim bankruptcy restrictions order, or a debt relief restrictions order or interim debt relief restrictions order under Schedule 4ZB of the Insolvency Act 1986.
6. Has, within five years before the day of his/her appointment, been convicted of any offence and had passed upon him/her a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than 3 months without the option of a fine.
7. Has been convicted of a corrupt or illegal practice under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
8. Are disqualified from being or becoming a member due to sexual offences as defined in Section 81 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972.
9. Are disqualified from being or becoming a member following a conviction under Section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

Other requirements

- You must disclose to the Council any matter in his/her background which, if it became public, might cause the council to reconsider the appointment.
- You should be committed to the term of appointment which is four years from the date of appointment.

Section 5 – The Governance and Audit Committee’s Terms of Reference

Statement of purpose

The purpose of the Governance and Audit Committee is to monitor governance, risk management and internal control arrangements at the Council, to provide independent assurance that these are effective and efficient.

This is achieved through key regular items received by the Committee in relation to, but not limited to; internal and external audit, key finance items, governance reviews and strategic risk management reporting.

Internal Audit

1. To consider and approve annually the Internal Audit plan of work, considering the scope and depth of the work in addressing the Council’s significant risks and issues.
2. To consider the outcomes of the internal audit plan of work and to monitor management’s progress in implementing agreed audit recommendations.
3. To consider and approve the Annual Report and Opinion of the Head of Internal Audit, ensuring that the systems of internal control, governance and risk management have been effective and efficient over the course of the year.
4. To consider the performance of the internal auditors in relation to the adherence to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

External Audit

5. To consider annually the External Audit plan of work.
6. To consider External Audit reports and letters. Accounts / Finance
7. To consider the extent of the Council’s compliance with its own and other published financial statements and controls.
8. To review and approve the annual Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement contained therein.
9. To approve the Council’s Treasury Management Strategy & Policy and subsequent performance against this. Risk Management
10. To monitor and approve policies for the effective development and operation of risk management and corporate governance in the Council.

Governance

11. To review the Council’s arrangements for governance, with particular regard to the Local Code of Corporate Governance.

12. To review allegations from whistleblowers; and to review and approve all Council policies and strategies that relate to the prevention of fraud and corruption including (but not limited to) policies on counter fraud, whistleblowing and money laundering.

13. To hold periodic private discussion with the Head of Internal Audit and the External Auditors to review working relationships and discuss any pertinent issues.

14. To commission ad-hoc work from internal and external audit.

15. To report annually to Full Council on the Committee's work and performance during the financial year.

16. To assess the Committee's own effectiveness on an annual basis against best practice.

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Section 6 – Application Form**SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL****INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Individuals who wish to be considered for appointment as members of the Governance and Audit Committee are requested to provide the following information to support their application. All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be used for the purposes of selecting Governance and Audit Committee Independent Members. You may continue on separate sheets, if necessary, referring to the relevant section of the form

Part 1 – About you
Name:
Address and Postcode:
Contact Telephone Numbers:
E-mail address:

Part 2 – Qualifications
Please list any qualifications which you think are relevant to the position of Independent Member of the Governance and Audit Committee.

Part 3 – Summary of Experience

Please give a brief account of your experience including career, public and voluntary work together with the nature of your current or most recent occupation

Part 4 – Relevant Expertise/Skills

Please provide details of your knowledge or expertise which you believe would be particularly relevant to the role of Independent Member of the Governance and Audit Committee

Part 5 – Attributes

Why do you wish to be considered for membership of the Governance and Audit Committee and what particular attributes do you believe you would bring to the work of the Committee?

Empty response area for Part 5.

Part 6 – References

Please provide the names, addresses and contact telephone numbers of two persons whom we could approach for reference purposes:-

Empty response area for Part 6.

Part 7 – Your eligibility

Please answer all questions by placing a tick in the appropriate box:

	Yes	No
Are you over 18?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you been elected as a South Holland District Councillor within or been an Officer of the Council during the last 5 years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you employed or hold any paid office with the Authority or do you hold a politically restricted post within a Local Authority?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you a close friend or relation of any South Holland District Councillor or Officer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you in regular social or professional contact with any South Holland District Councillors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you officially bankrupt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you been sentenced within the last 5 years to a term of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) of three months or more without the option of a fine?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you been or are you disqualified from being a Member of a Local Authority for any reason as set in Section 4 Eligibility for Appointment of the Recruitment Pack?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you any contractual relationship with the Council beyond that of any other citizen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you owed money by, or do you owe money to, the Council?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you satisfied that a member of the public who was aware of any contact you have with the Council or councillors would have confidence in your independence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 8 – Your declaration

I certify that in submitting this application that to the best of my knowledge and belief the above details are correct

Signed

Date

Please return the completed form marked 'Personal' to:

Demservices@sholland.gov.uk or

Democratic Services
South Holland District Council
Council Offices
Priory Road
Spalding
Lincs
PE11 2XE

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