**Person Specification – Independent Chair of the Audit Committee**

| **EXPERIENCE** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Adopting a high standard of behaviour, demonstrating honesty, probity and the highest level of integrity in conduct.  | Essential  |  |
| Practical experience in a finance / audit related role within the public or private sector, or relevant finance qualifications; e.g. experience gained working in or with a large, or public sector, organisation or serving on a Committee or Board. | Essential  |  |
| Previous experience of chairing or serving on an Audit Committee. |  | Desirable |
| **SKILLS** |  |
| Analytical skills including the ability to review information and evidence and reach rational conclusions, incorporating appropriate advice.  | Essential |  |
| Ability to be objective, independent and impartial. | Essential |  |
| Able to provide effective and constructive challenge.  | Essential |  |
| Ability to work as part of a team.  | Essential |  |
| Good communication and interpersonal skills. | Essential |  |
| Strong strategic awareness with ability to identify emerging external factors that may impact on strategy, implementation of plans, or reputation with key stakeholders.  | Essential |  |
| Digitally aware, with good IT skills and the ability to access reports, information and communication electronically.  | Essential |  |
| **KNOWLEDGE** |  |
| Knowledge of the challenges facing Oldham Council and wider public services and understanding of its communities. | Essential |  |
| Understanding of the complexity of issues surrounding 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 mitigating controls to limit fraud. |  | Desirable |
| **OTHER** |  |
| Be aged over 18 years.  | Essential |  |
| Live, work or study in the Oldham area.  |  | Desirable |
| Affinity with the values of public service.  | Essential |  |
| Candidates should be able to demonstrate their political independence. | Essential |  |
| Devote time to meet the needs of the role which will include attendance at scheduled meetings through the year. | Essential |  |

**Disqualifications**

You cannot be considered for appointment if you:-

* Have been an employee or Elected Member of Oldham Council in the last five years.
* Are a relative or close friend of an employee or Elected Member of the Council.
* Engage in any party political activity.
* Have any criminal convictions.
* Have any significant business dealings with the Council.

To be eligible for appointment, a person must not be disqualified from holding office as a member of the Local Authority.

**Information for applicants**

**Time Commitment**

The appointed candidate will be expected to attend approximately four / five meetings per year. Meetings are in the evenings and start at 6:00 pm.

Previous meetings can be found at:

<http://decisionrecording.oldham.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=134&Year=0>

**Allowance**

An allowance of £2,106 per annum is made for the role.

**Term**

The person will be appointed by full Council and this will be subject to renewal on an annual basis at the Council’s Annual Meeting held in May.

In order to maintain an independent perspective, it is expected that candidates will serve for four years and this will be confirmed by the Council when it approves the appointment. However, this may be varied by the Council at any time.

**The role of the Council’s Audit Committee**

**Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the committee is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the Authority’s financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Authority’s exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process.

**Composition**

Membership of the Audit and Accounts Committee shall comprise 7 Members, be politically balanced and shall not include any Members of the Executive. A non voting member, with appropriate skills and experience, may be co-opted on to the Committee with the approval of the Council.

**Terms of Reference**

**Internal and External Audit:**

1. Review and approve (but not direct) the terms of reference for Internal Audit, an Internal Audit strategy and internal audit resourcing.
2. Review and approve (but not direct) the annual Internal Audit work programme. Consider the proposed and actual Internal Audit coverage and whether this provides adequate assurance on organisations main business risks, review the performance of Internal Audit.
3. Receive summary internal audit reports and seek assurance on the adequacy of management response to internal audit advice, recommendations and action plans.
4. Review arrangements made for cooperation between Internal Audit, External Audit and other review bodies and ensure that there are effective relationships which actively promote the value of the audit process.
5. Receive the Annual Internal Audit report and opinion.
6. Review and consider proposed and actual External Audit coverage and its adequacy and consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies.
7. Receive updates from External Audit on External Audit findings and opinions (including the audit of the annual financial statements and the value for money conclusion) and seek assurance on the adequacy of management response to External Audit advice, recommendations and action plans.

**Risk Management:**

1. Review the adequacy of arrangements for identifying and managing the organisation's business risks, including partnerships with other organisations. This includes review of the Council’s risk management policy and strategy and their implementation.
2. Review the robustness of the strategic risk register and the adequacy of associated risk management arrangements.
3. Receive and consider regular reports on the risk environment and associated management action.

**Internal Control Arrangements, Corporate Governance and the Annual Governance Statement:**

1. Review the effectiveness of corporate governance arrangements and internal control across the organisation and the adequacy of action taken to address any weaknesses or control failures.
2. Review the draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which is a key assurance statement required to be completed each year in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
3. Approve the final version of the Annual Governance Statement.

**Anti - Fraud and Corruption Arrangements:**

1. Review and ensure the adequacy of the organisation’s Anti – Fraud & Corruption policy and strategy and the effectiveness of their application throughout the Authority.
2. Review and ensure that adequate arrangements are established and operating to deal with situations of suspected or actual fraud and corruption.

**Financial Statements/Accounts:**

1. Approve the annual Statement of Accounts, including subsequent amendments.
2. Consider the External Auditor’s report on the audit of the annual financial statements.
3. Be responsible for any matters arising from the audit of the Council’s accounts, including the auditor’s opinion on the accounts, identification of any misstatements, comments on the accounting and internal control systems and qualitative aspects of accounting practices and financial reporting.

**Access and Reporting:**

1. To have the right of access to senior officers and all committees of the Council.
2. To report directly to the Executive or Council, as appropriate, on matters within these terms of reference.

**Delegation:**

In exercising the power and duties assigned to the Committee in its terms of reference, the Audit and Accounts Committee shall have delegated power to resolve and to act on behalf of and in the name of the Council.