

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – INDEPENDENT MEMBER

ROLE DESCRIPTION

South Derbyshire District Council is committed to ensuring and demonstrating good governance and has established an Audit and Governance Committee in 2025.

The Audit and Governance Committee is a key component of the Council's corporate governance. It provides a high-level focus on the audit assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

The Committee meets 5 times per year at 6pm in the Council Chamber at the Civic Offices, Civic Way, Swadlincote, Derbyshire.

The Council is seeking to appoint 2 Independent Members to the Audit and Governance Committee

The appointments carry a Responsibility Allowance of £1,463.50 per annum and are for a term of 3 years.

Purpose

The purpose of the Independent Member is to support meetings of the Audit and Governance Committee, providing an independent and impartial presence at meetings and making valuable contributions to the governance of the Council.

Roles and responsibilities of Co-opted Members of the Audit and Governance Committee

Responsible to: The Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee.

Liaison with: Members of the Audit and Governance Committee, Statutory Officers, Officers and Members of the Council and other stakeholders within the community.

General:

The Independent Member is expected to work to the Council's Core Values: to shape our environment, drive our economy, support our communities and transform our Council.

Main duties and responsibilities:

The duties and responsibilities in this job description are not exhaustive. The Independent Member may be required to undertake other duties than those listed below, within the general scope of the post. Any such duties should not substantially change the general character of the post.

As a member of the public, the Independent Member will-

- Work alongside the Council's Elected Members on the Audit and Governance Committee to effectively discharge the committee's role to provide independent assurance to the Council of the adequacy of the Risk Management Framework and the internal control environment and to provide an independent review of the Council's governance, risk management and control frameworks.
- Be an active member of the Audit and Governance Committee in discharging the Committee's functions as follows:

General:

1. *To have responsibility for reviewing in respect of governance, risk and control arrangements, financial and governance reporting, and audit and assurance arrangements including:*
 - (a) *Risk management*
 - (b) *Securing value for money*
 - (c) *Counter fraud*
 - (d) *Internal and external audit*
 - (e) *Asset management*
 - (f) *Financial management*
 - (g) *Corporate governance*
 - (h) *Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)*
 - (i) *Ethical standards and Member conduct*
2. *To approve the Statement of Accounts as required by Regulation 10 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended).*

Financial and Governance Reporting:

1. *To approve the Annual Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and specifically consider whether:*
 - (a) *they properly reflect the risk environment, including any actions required to improve it, and demonstrate how governance supports the achievement of the Council's objectives*
 - (b) *appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the annual audit that need to be brought to the attention of Council*
2. *To consider and accept the Annual Letter from the Local Auditor in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and to monitor the Council's response to any issues of concern identified.*

Internal Audit:

1. *To oversee Internal Audit's independence, objectivity, performance and conformance to professional standards.*
2. *To consider the Head of Internal Audit's Annual Report and opinion, and a summary of internal audit activity.*
3. *To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports, as requested.*
4. *To consider a report from Internal Audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.*
5. *To approve the Internal Audit Plan.*
6. *To approve significant interim changes to the Annual Audit Plan and resource requirements.*
7. *To contribute to the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme and to the external quality assessment of Internal Audit that takes place at least once every five years.*
8. *To consider a report on the effectiveness of Internal Audit to support the Annual Governance Statement where required to do so by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.*
9. *To support the development of effective communication with the Head of Internal Audit.*

External Audit

1. *Consider the opinion, reports and recommendations of external audit and inspection agencies and their implications for governance, risk management or control, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit.*
2. *To consider specific reports as agreed with the local auditor.*
3. *To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it provides value for money.*
4. *Consider the arrangements in place to secure adequate assurance across the body's full range of operations and collaborations with other entities.*

Audit Management:

1. *To ensure that there are effective relationships between External and Internal Audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted.*

2. *To commission work from Internal and External Audit subject to approval by the Responsible Finance Officer.*

Governance, Risk, Control

1. *Monitor the effectiveness of the system of internal control, including arrangements for financial management, ensuring value for money, supporting standards and ethics and managing the authority's exposure to the risks of fraud and corruption.*
2. *To review Council commercial activity, including oversight of procurement.*
3. *To review any issue referred to it by the Chief Executive or Executive Director, or any Council body.*
4. *To monitor the effective development, operation and effectiveness of risk management.*
5. *To monitor the effectiveness of Council's Whistleblowing Policy and the anti-fraud and anti-corruption strategy.*
6. *To approve the Council's Annual Governance Statement and Code of Corporate Governance and monitor progress on any issues.*
7. *To consider the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and to agree necessary actions to ensure compliance with best practice and best value.*
8. *To consider the Council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls to ensure the robustness of its arrangements to implement policies and manage resources.*

Standards:

1. *To advise Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct and any other Codes and Protocols, as necessary.*
2. *To promote and maintain high ethical standards of conduct and probity by councillors and co-opted members.*
3. *To assist councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct.*
4. *To monitor the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct.*
5. *To advise, and to provide or arrange for training for councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct.*
6. *To receive summary reports from the Monitoring Officer on those formal investigations finding no evidence of failure to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct.*

7. *To monitor and review procedures relating to gifts, hospitality and personal interests for councillors and officers.*
8. *To deal with any reports from the Monitoring Officer on matters relating to probity issues.*
9. *To discharge such other functions, either general or specific, as Council may from time to time allocate to the Committee.*

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
1. Relevant experience		
Practical experience in the financial and/or general management of businesses or public sector organisations	✓	
Experience in Local Government Environment.		✓
Audit Committee (or equivalent) experience.		✓
2. Qualifications		
Professional Accountancy, Audit or Risk Management qualification		✓
3. Equalities		
Knowledge of and commitment to Equality and Diversity	✓	
4. Personal skills, Knowledge and qualities		
Knowledge of how local government works	✓	
An understanding of the roles of internal and external audit		✓
Knowledge of corporate governance arrangements in other public or private sector organisations		✓
Knowledge of risk management		✓
Demonstrate objectivity and political independence	✓	
High ethical standards	✓	
Ability to take an independent, unbiased and objective view	✓	

Demonstrates experience of and /or commitment to promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct	✓	
Ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing	✓	
Knowledge of financial management		✓
Ability to ask searching questions and make recommendations	✓	
Ability to examine evidence and complex documentation	✓	
Willing to work with other members of the committee, have regard to their views and reach consensus	✓	
Committed to maintaining confidentiality as appropriate	✓	
No formal political affiliations or a close relationship with any Member or Officer of the Council	✓	
Strong leadership skills and experience of chairing meetings		✓
Be able to attend meetings during evening hours in South Derbyshire approx. 5 times a year, as well as attend any appropriate training sessions.	✓	