

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 18 DECEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **SIZE OF AUDIT COMMITTEE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider whether to increase the number of members on the Audit Committee.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The current membership of the Audit Committee comprises seven Councillors and one lay member. All the political groups on the Council are represented with the exception of the Liberal Democrat Group.

2.02 At informal meetings between Audit Committee members and Overview & Scrutiny Chairs the question has been raised whether the Audit Committee should be larger. At the informal meeting on the 7 October it was indicated that a report would be brought to this meeting so that consideration could be given to this.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Section 82 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires that at least two thirds of the members of an Audit Committee must be members of the authority. It goes on to require that at least one member of the Audit Committee is a lay member. When this provision took effect in spring last year this led to the appointment of Paul Williams as a member of the Audit Committee.

3.02 The contribution that Mr Williams has made to the work of the committee as a member of it and for the time that he was Vice Chair has been highly valued and praised by the committee Chair. The committee may consider that this is as a result of his being a lay member and a reason for having a further lay member. Alternatively it may be felt that this is due to the particular qualities and experience that he has which is unlikely to be replicated in another lay member.

- 3.03 During the life of this Council the political balance requirements have meant that with the current size of the committee there has always been one political group not represented on it. Initially this was the New Independent Group but currently it is the Liberal Democrat Group. Members may consider that the size of the Audit Committee should be such as to enable each of the political groups on the Council to have a representative on the committee. If the size of the committee was increased to eight Councillors political balance would lead to three of those seats being from Labour and one from each of the other five political groups on the Council.
- 3.04 Any proposed changes to the current size of the committee require a recommendation to County Council and for an additional lay member the carrying out of a transparent recruitment process.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 For committee to consider whether it wishes to recommend to Council the change in the current size of the Audit Committee.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 Lay members are entitled to a payment of £99 for each meeting (less than four hours) that they attend.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 None as a result of this report.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

- 11.01 None as a result of this report.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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