



**Recruitment Pack
Independent
Member of the Audit
and Governance
Committee**

Would you like to do something worthwhile for Gloucestershire?

Do you feel you have the time and the skills to make a positive contribution to the County Council's Audit and Governance Committee?

Do you think you could bring an independent perspective to analyse the Council's arrangements for:-

- managing risk;
- maintaining an effective control environment; and
- reporting on financial and other performance matters?

We are looking to appoint an independent member to the Audit and Governance Committee, ideally someone with financial/auditing experience, or practical experience of managing risk.

If this opportunity interests you, but you would like to discuss it further without committing yourself, please contact either Simon Harper: Head of Democratic Services ☎ 01452 324202 or ✉ Simon.Harper@gloucestershire.gov.uk or Theresa Mortimer: Head of Audit Risk Assurance ☎ 01452 328883 or ✉ Theresa.Mortimer@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can request an information pack and application form by emailing ara@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Closing date for applications is: xxxx

Interviews to be held on:- week commencing xxxx

What are Gloucestershire County Council's Challenges and Opportunities?

Demographic change

- Gloucestershire's population is ageing more quickly than the UK average. The increasing number of retired people in the county will bring experience, resources and time to their communities, but as they grow older and more frail will also need more support from health, social care and safeguarding services. We are also seeing increasing numbers of people living with disabilities and other long-term conditions in all age groups.
- At the same time, our 18-64 population is expected to remain static. Young people tend to leave the county in their late teens and early twenties - the net loss can be as many as 400 19-25 year olds per year. While the concept of 'working age' is shifting, we do need to respond to this challenge to make sure we have the skills we need to keep the county competitive and support economic growth.
- We can also expect to see a trend towards more people living as single person households. This will make it less easy for people to rely on immediate family for help and support in the future, and make it more important that they are part of resilient communities that look out for one another.

Inequalities and deprivation

- While living standards are high overall, there are areas of the county where residents' outcomes fall well below national averages and where, as a result, local people are more likely to depend on the services we provide. 21,000 people (3.4% of the county's population) live in areas amongst the most deprived 10% in England.

Rural isolation

- As well as being one of our best assets, the rural nature of the county makes it difficult for some people to access the services they need. This is a particular challenge for the three out of every twenty Gloucestershire households that have no access to a car or van.

Financial reforms

- The basis on which councils are funded has changed over recent years. We have seen significant reductions in the level of funding we receive from Central Government. Whilst we do not yet know the outcome of the Fair Funding Review for Local Government or the next Comprehensive Spending Review, we expect to see further significant changes, including the phasing out of the Revenue Support Grant and the introduction of a funding model based on business rates retention. This would mean that future funding would be more closely linked to growth in the local economy than has previously been the case. We are also likely to see more of a 'whole system' approach to funding, such as through the current pooling pilot with district councils and the roll out of 'Integrated Care Systems' with the NHS.

Our economic potential as a growing county

- The growth that is planned for Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury is a game-changer. It allows us to think imaginatively about the role we want Gloucestershire to play in the sub-region, and the infrastructure we need to put in place to make that happen. It has the potential to free us from some of the constraints that would otherwise hamper economic growth, and to enable change on a significant scale.

Role, Purpose and Description

Background Information

The aim of the independent member is to bring a fresh and objective viewpoint to the work of the Audit and Governance Committee and support them to carry out their work.

The Audit and Governance Committee comprises eleven Councillors who are not part of the ruling administration.

The role of the Audit and Governance Committee has evolved and they are central to the governance, internal control, compliance and risk aspects of the operation of the Council. 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.

The work of the Audit and Governance Committee includes:-

- [Annual Governance Statement](#)
- [Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report](#)
- [Annual Statement of Accounts](#)

Full details of the Committee's responsibilities are in the Audit and Governance Committee Terms of Reference at Appendix 1. These form part of Gloucestershire County Council's Constitution.

Members of the Audit and Governance Committee receive training relevant to their role and are expected to keep up to date.

The independent member will be appointed through a process of public advertisement, application, interview and appointment.

The Council has a commitment to equal opportunities and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community. Also we operate a no smoking policy.

An annual allowance plus reasonable travel expenses is payable, currently £500 per year will be payable. It is for a fixed term of 4 years.

The independent member will attend and participate in meetings of the County Council's Audit and Governance Committee.

The Audit and Governance Committee meets four times per year and on an 'exception' basis as required.

The independent member, through their participation in the Audit and Governance Committee, will assist the County Council to discharge their powers and functions as set out in the Audit and Governance Committee Terms of Reference.

- To apply strategic thinking and materiality to reports presented and be able to review at an appropriate level.
- To ask questions that draw out relevant facts and explanations.
- To provide challenge.
- To seek understanding and enable solutions.
- To evaluate information on the basis of evidence presented without political bias.
- To weigh up differing views and be able to come to an evidence based conclusion.
- To ask difficult questions to get to the facts while maintaining positive relationships.

Members or officers of Gloucestershire County Council or anyone who has or is a relative or close friend of a member or officer of the Council is not eligible.

More detail can be found in Appendix 2 – Disqualifications for Appointment.

Person Specification

Requirements	Where identified*	Essential	Desirable
A broad range of experience, preferably in public, private, voluntary and charitable sector employment or service including self-employed, employed and voluntary positions.	A	✓	
Understanding of the wider local government environment and accountability structures.	A		✓
Strategic/financial management responsibilities.	A		✓
Qualification in accountancy, finance, risk management, business management or internal audit.	A		✓
Good understanding of corporate governance and risk management and the key elements of audit, best value and external scrutiny. The ability to formulate and evaluate solutions to the issues identified.	A		✓
Good understanding of the roles of internal and external audit.	I		✓
Ability to understand complex issues and make objective, evidence-based decisions.	I	✓	
Strong interpersonal and communication skills	I	✓	
Willingness to participate in meetings and ask searching questions in order to challenge and hold to account Council Officers and the representatives of internal and external audit.	I	✓	
Attend and prepare for each meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee.	I	✓	
Ability/willingness to attend any relevant training or development activities associated with the role.	I	✓	
Independence of mind, objectivity and impartiality.	I	✓	

* A is application form

I is interview

A. The Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) Regulations 2001.

- (i) if a person has within the period of five years immediately preceding the date of the appointment been a member or officer of Gloucestershire County Council
- (ii) if a person is a serving member or officer of any other Relevant Authority; and
- (iii) if a person is a relative or close friend of a member or officer of Gloucestershire County Council

relative" - means a spouse, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, or the spouse or partner of any of the preceding persons.

partner" - means a member of a couple who live together.

relevant authority" - includes a county council, a unitary council, a district council, a parish council.

B. Summary of Sections 80 and 81 of the Local Government Act 1972.

- (i) A person shall be disqualified from being appointed if he/she: -
 - (a) holds any paid office or employment with the Authority;
 - (b) is a person who has been adjudged bankrupt or made a composition or arrangement with his/her creditors;
 - (c) 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 three months without the option of a fine;
 - (d) has been convicted of a corrupt or illegal practice under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983;
 - (e) is disqualified for membership for a specified period by Order of the Court because of his/her involvement in expenditure contrary to law; and
 - (f) is disqualified from membership for five years following an Auditor's certificate that a loss or deficiency has been caused by his/her wilful misconduct while a member of a local authority.

- ii) The disqualification attaching to a person by reason of having been adjudged bankrupt ceases: -
 - (a) on his/her discharge from bankruptcy unless the bankruptcy order made against the person is previously annulled; and
 - (b) if the bankruptcy order is so annulled, on the date of the annulment.
- (iii) The disqualification attaching to a person by reason of his/her having made a composition or arrangement with his/her creditors ceases: -
 - (a) on the date on which payment is completed if he/she pays the debts in full; or
 - (b) in any other case, on the expiration of five years from the date on which the terms of the deed of composition or arrangement are fulfilled.