

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS SOUGHT FOR AUDIT COMMITTEE

July 2023

Milton Keynes City Council is seeking Independent Members to join its Audit Committee.

The Committee is looking for local people with an interest in finance and governance to enhance the Audit Committees' work on behalf of the people of Milton Keynes. It is an interesting role that would give you input into the Council's policy and practices as well as learning about the systems and processes that support the broad and complex range of Council services especially the financial / risk management of those services.

Experience & Knowledge

Applicants must have experience working at a senior level, not necessarily in the public sector, but with an interest in the workings of local government. You will be an impartial, independent-minded person who might also have experience in Audit, Finance or Risk Management.

Commitment

The Committee meets at least 4 times a year (usually in the evening), with the possibility of occasional special meetings or invitations to sit on sub-committees or working groups appointed by the Committee. There is a requirement in between meetings to read agendas and related papers.

Additional requirements

You must not be disqualified from serving as a co-opted member of Milton Keynes City Council* or be a councillor with Milton Keynes, or any other principal council or have served as a councillor in the 5 years prior to this appointment. You should also be impartial and have no connection with any political party or group. It is essential that your role is and is seen to be independent.

Payment

Independent members will receive a small fixed annual allowance (£670 per annum) and their travelling and subsistence expenses are paid.

Applications

Please return your completed application form by email: alex.melia@milton-keynes.gov.uk or by post (at the below address):

Alex Melia, Senior Governance Officer, Democratic Services, Milton Keynes City Council, Civic Offices, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes, MK9 3EJ.

Deadline for applications is midnight on Friday 11 August.

* section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 and section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

AUDIT COMMITTEE – INDEPENDENT MEMBER

JOB DESCRIPTION

KEY PURPOSE

Milton Keynes City Council is committed to ensuring and demonstrating good governance and has established an Audit Committee with a remit based on the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Practical Guidance for Local Authorities' 2013.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

The role of the Independent Members of the Committee will be to independently assist the Audit Committee to effectively discharge its role by providing advice and scrutiny on matters relating to the Council's arrangements for audit, risk management, governance and control.

The Audit Committee meets four times per year. Independent Members are expected to make arrangements to attend the majority of meetings.

Aims and role

- To attend and participate in meetings of the Council's Audit Committee.
- To assist the Council to discharge its powers and functions as set out in the remit of the Audit Committee.

Skills required (See also Person Specification)

- High ethical standards.
- Good communication skills both written and oral
- A willingness to participate in meetings
- Ability to take an independent, unbiased and objective view
- Ability to examine evidence and complex documentation
- Ability to ask searching questions
- A knowledge or interest in financial matters would be desirable

Time commitment

Not likely to be more than 1 day every 2/3 months, up to a maximum of 10 days per year.

Remuneration

A £670 pa allowance (subject to annual indexation), plus reasonable travel expenses.

Special Conditions

The following are not eligible to serve as Independent Members:

- a serving Councillor or Officer (or the spouse or civil partner of a Councillor or Officer) of Milton Keynes City Council, or any MK Borough Town or Parish Council;
- a former Councillor or Officer of Milton Keynes City Council;
- an individual who has a material business connection with the Council; or
- those disqualified from serving as a co-opted member (see section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 and section 34 of the Localism Act 2011).

The Council has further agreed that independent members should not:

- be active in local or national politics;
- have had significant previous dealings with the Council which compromise their impartiality; or
- have a close relationship with any Member or Officer of the Council.

In addition:

- You will be required to sign an undertaking to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.
- Canvassing by the candidate will disqualify your application.

It is anticipated that the initial period of the appointment would be for 4 years.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Assessment Areas	Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria
Relevant Experience		<p>Practical experience in the financial and / or general management of businesses or public sector organisations</p> <p>Experience in Local Government Environment.</p> <p>Audit Committee (or equivalent) experience.</p>
Specific Skills, Abilities and Qualities	<p>Understanding and appreciation of the importance of good corporate governance and of the key elements of audit, risk management, best value and external scrutiny.</p> <p>Understanding of the environment within which Councils operate (including knowledge of the principles and practises of audit, risk management, best value, external scrutiny).</p> <p>High Level of inter-personal skills and ability to work effectively with Elected Members and Council Officers in a formal Committee environment.</p> <p>The ability to assess issues relating to risk and control, and to identify and evaluate solutions.</p> <p>Ability and confidence to challenge and hold to account Council Officers, Portfolio Holders and representatives of Internal and External Audit.</p>	<p>Understanding of the wider local government environment and accountability structures.</p> <p>Awareness of Milton Keynes and its communities and the challenges faced.</p> <p>Knowledge/skills/ experience in audit or risk management, or other technical specialities pertinent to the Council's activities.</p> <p>Good understanding of the roles of Internal and External Audit</p>

Assessment Areas	Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria
Required Qualifications		Degree or relevant further education or professional qualification in accountancy, finance, risk management, business management or internal audit.
Any Additional Job Related Requirements	<p>Available to attend and undertake appropriate preparation for each meeting of the Council's Audit Committee.</p> <p>Ability / willingness to attend any relevant training or development activities associated with the role.</p>	
Equality	Knowledge of and commitment to Equality and Diversity	