



East Herts Council

Appointment of Independent Members of The Audit and Governance Committee

The Audit and Governance Committee

The Audit and Governance Committee is currently composed of 7 elected members and is politically balanced. The Committee meets approximately four times a year, with meetings held in person in the Council Chamber at East Herts Council's Wallfields Offices in Hertford, commencing at 7pm. The successful applicant will need to be available to attend these meetings and any associated training and development events.

The Committee is a key element of the Council's arrangements to support good governance. It has the specific role of monitoring the Budget, approving the council's Statement of Accounts and acting as the council's audit committee. The Committee also carries out the monitoring of the council's treasury management functions.

The co-option of two independent members to the Committee will help to bring additional knowledge and expertise and will also reinforce its political neutrality and independence. Co-opted members to Council committees are not members of the Council itself, therefore other than in limited circumstances they have no voting rights. Co-opted members would instead be consulted during committee meetings and their views taken into account by voting members of the committee.

Following a review by Sir Tony Redmond in 2020, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA) recommended that "each authority's audit committee should include at least two co-opted independent members".

Key Responsibilities and Commitments

The independent members will need to have appropriate skills, experiences and competencies to meet the key responsibilities and commitments below.

- Committing to attend and constructively participate in meetings.
- Thorough preparation for meetings through careful consideration of all agenda reports and documents.
- Questioning Executive Members and senior management on issues arising from committee papers with due regard to the role of the committee.
- Adopting and demonstrating a politically neutral perspective in questions asked and the general contribution to the work of the committee.
- Applying relevant skills and experiences to add value and depth to the work of the committee.
- Committing to personal development in the role.
- Committing to attend training sessions in accordance with agreed development
- Signing and abiding by the Members Code of Conduct.
- Adopting the highest levels of personal integrity, openness and honesty.

Person Specification

The attributes that we are looking for are listed below. Applicants for the role should complete the application form to express their interest and explain how they meet the desirable requirements.

- Good advocacy skills: able to present relevant and well-reasoned arguments and provide effective and constructive challenge.
- Ability to effectively analyse and interpret complex issues arising from written and verbal reports on finance, audit, risk management and governance matters.

- Good understanding of the importance of accountability and probity in public life.
- Ability to demonstrate objectivity, integrity and discretion.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills; a confident public speaker.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.

Knowledge of the following is desirable:

- Previous experience of audit committees.
- Understanding of local government and the role of officers and members.
- The council's objectives, key activities and the key challenges it faces.
- Financial management / accountancy / risk management / governance within the public or private sector.
- Understanding of the roles and purpose of Internal and External Audit.

Other

You must:

- Have local connections, and either reside within the area of East Hertfordshire, carry out the main part of your work or have other recognisable ties to the area.
- Agree to abide by the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct while serving on the Committee.
- Disclose to the Council any matter that might damage its reputation or indicate a real or perceived conflict of interest with the role of the Committee.

You must **not**:

- Be a councillor or officer of the Council or have been so in the preceding five years prior to appointment.

- Be related to, or a close friend of, any councillor or officer of the Council.
- Have been convicted of any offence attracting a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for not less than a period of 3 months without the option of a fine. The Council has the right to DBS check any independent committee members.
- Be an undischarged bankrupt.
- Have significant business dealings with the Council.
- Have a formal connection with any political group.
- Be an employee of or the holder of a significant office in an organisation with close commercial links with the Council.
- Have Council Tax, Business Rates arrears or other debts owing to the Council.

Remuneration

£2,500 pa, to be paid in monthly instalments.

Behaviour and Code of Conduct

Whilst operating as a member of the Audit and Governance Committee, co-opted independent members are expected to follow the Local Government Association's Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020.

A copy of the current code of conduct can be found here:

[Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 \(eastherts.gov.uk\)](https://www.eastherts.gov.uk)

Application and Selection Process

Please submit your application form (below) to James Ellis, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer:

2 Have you ever been a Councillor, co-opted member or officer of East Herts Council or a Councillor, co-opted member or officer of a parish or town council which falls within East Hertfordshire?

YES/NO

*If your answer to this question is yes, please give the date on which you ceased to be a
Member or employee.*

3 Are you related to, or a close friend of, a member or employee of East Herts Council?

YES/NO

If your answer to this question is yes, please give details below

4 Are you, or have you been a member of a political party?

YES/NO

If the answer to this question is yes, please give details below

5 Please indicate whether there is any matter concerning your own conduct which, if it were generally known, might affect public confidence in your ability to contribute to the work of the Audit and Governance Committee.

YES/NO

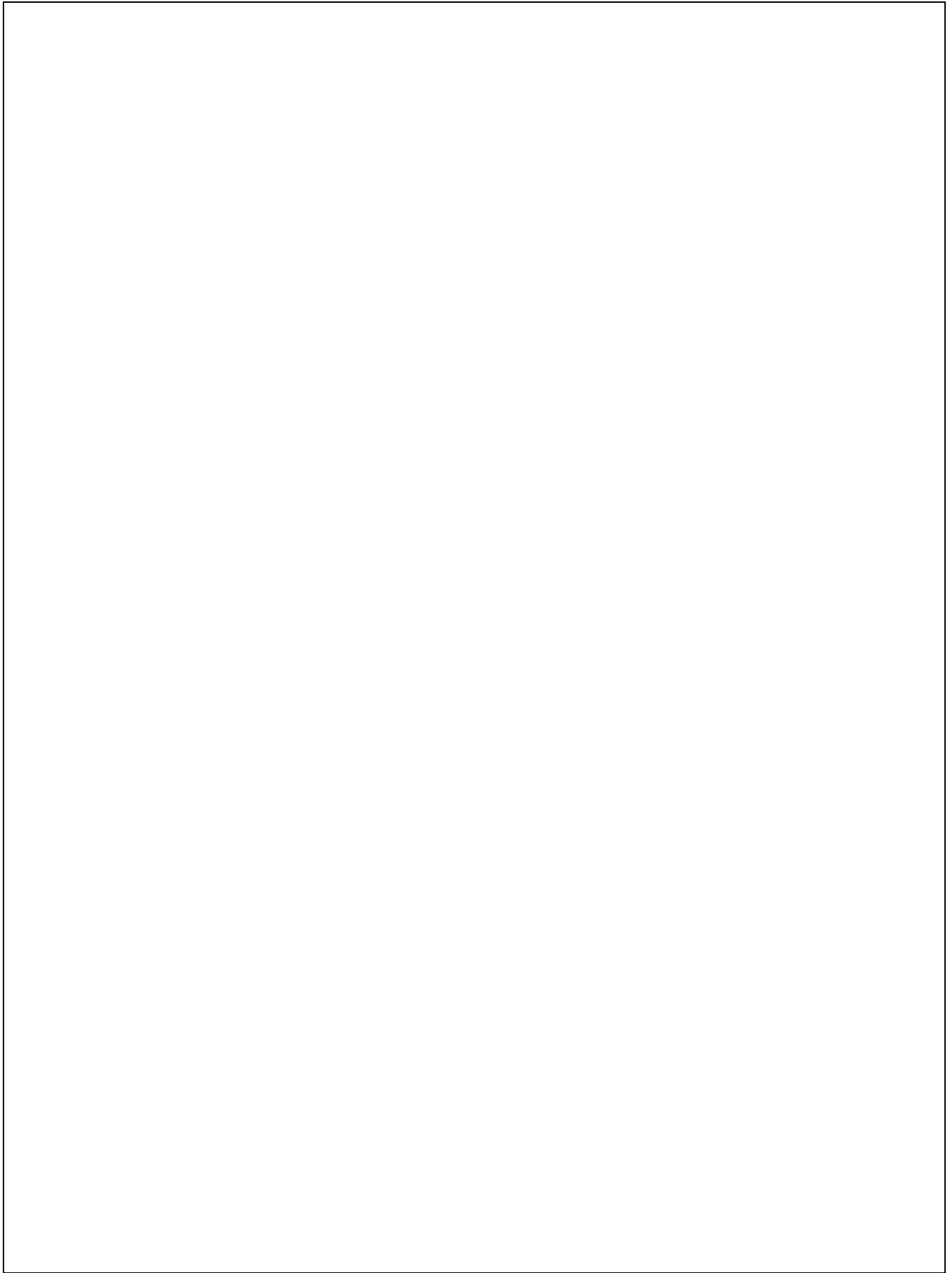
If your answer to this question is yes, please give details below.

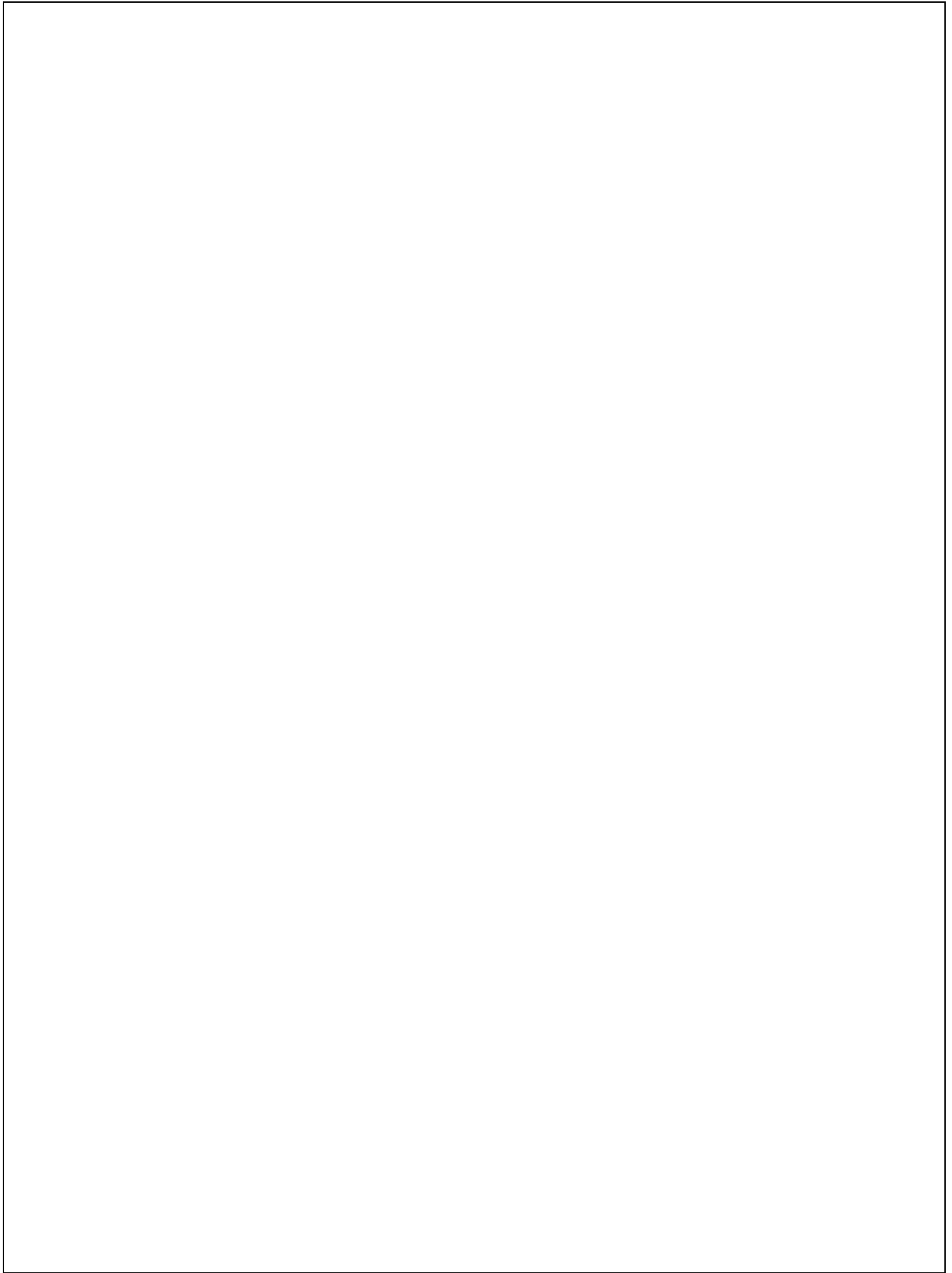
6 Please confirm that you are able to meet the attendance requirements of the role i.e. attending early evening meetings in person at the designated Council venue.

YES/NO

7 Please say why you wish to be considered for the post of Independent Member and what you could offer the Council. Give brief details of your experience (e.g. employment / business / professional /voluntary/ public service) and qualifications, and any other matter which you consider relevant to your suitability for appointment.

Please also explain how you meet the person specification outlined in this application pack.





References: Please give the name, address, and telephone number of two referees who are not related to you and are not members of a town or parish council within East Hertfordshire and who are able to comment on your suitability for appointment. (Your referees will be contacted without further notice to you unless you indicate to the contrary).

Referee 1

Name:

Address

Contact
Number:

Referee2

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Name: | |
| Address | |
| Contact Number: | |

Data Protection Act

Information from this form will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. In signing it you agree to this data being held and processed and if appointed to the position you also agree to further personal information, including sensitive data (e.g. bank details) being held and processed by East Herts Council in accordance with the Act.

DECLARATION

I wish to be considered for appointment as an Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee and confirm that, if appointed, I will undertake to observe the code of conduct for councillors and co-opted members of East Herts Council, as adopted by the Council.

The information which I have given is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

| | |
|------|--|
| NAME | |
| DATE | |

Please return the completed application form to:

James Ellis, Head and Legal and Democratic Services:

- **Email:** james.ellis@eastherts.gov.uk
- **By post:** James Ellis, Head of Legal and Democratic Services,
East Herts Council, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford,
Hertfordshire, SG13 8EQ

The **closing date** for applications is