



Thursday, 13 November 2025

Report of Councillor Philip Knowles,
Cabinet Member for Corporate
Governance and Licensing

Co-opted Member of Governance and Audit Committee

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

This report provides the Governance and Audit Committee with an opportunity to extend the term of office for the incumbent External Co-opted Member.

It is likely that the Committee will be recommended to exclude the press and public during the discussion of this agenda item because under Section 100 (A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972, it is likely, that if they were present, there could be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Recommendations

Governance and Audit Committee is asked to:

- 1. Agree that the term for the current external co-opted member be extended for a further year to 13 November 2026.**
- 2. Receive a further report following a review of the role of external co-opted member on the Governance and Audit Committee to ascertain whether additional co-optees would be required.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Effective council
Which wards are impacted?	(All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The Members' Allowances Scheme includes provision for the payment of £1,500 per annum for Independent Persons. Given the independent and external nature of this post, which is deemed as being similar in nature to that of the Independent Persons appointed to support the Council's Monitoring Officer and Standards Committee in relation to the Councillor Code of Conduct, it is recommended that the External Co-opted Member continues to receive the same level of remuneration. This appointment would therefore incur a cost of £1,500 per annum to the Council, which can be met from the allocated budget for the Members' Allowances Scheme.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 Paragraph 9.2 of Part 2 (Articles) of the Council's Constitution states:
“The Committee may appoint, as a Co-opted Member, an external appointee as a member of the Governance and Audit Committee....”
- 1.3 The Governance and Audit Committee appointed the current Co-opted Member for a one-year term at their meeting held on 27 November 2024.
- 1.4 There is no known requirement in law to have a co-opted external member of the committee, however it is recognised as best practice to appoint co-opted member(s) by bodies including CIPFA. This view was also supported by other sources, such as the Council's External and Internal Auditors.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Governance and Audit Committee has the ability as part of its terms of reference in the Constitution to appoint an External Co-opted Member onto its Committee
- 2.2 Alan Bowling was appointed as an 'External Co-opted Member' at the Governance and Audit meeting held on 27 November 2024.
- 2.3 An External Co-opted Member can take part in debate and ask questions at Governance and Audit Committee, but they do not have a vote.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 Members of the Committee have fed back positively on the contributions of the current Co-Opted Member over the past year.
- 3.2 Whilst there is no known legal requirement for Audit Committees to have an external co-opted member, to not retain this role would go against the advice of notable bodies such as CIPFA, as well as previous advice from the Council's internal and external auditors.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 To re-appoint Alan Bowling for a further year – this is the preferred option.
- 4.2 To not re-appoint Alan Bowling and therefore have no Co-optee on the Governance and Audit Committee.
- 4.3 To undertake a full recruitment exercise prior to the next meeting of Governance and Audit in January 2026.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 The addition of a co-opted member to the Governance and Audit Committee has so far been received positively by fellow Committee members.
- 5.2 Examples have been found locally and nationally of Councils appointing a co-opted member for a period of four years. However, with Local Government Re-organisation (LGR) looming, it is prudent to appoint a co-opted member for a further year. In a year's time more should be known about the future governance structures in Lincolnshire.
- 5.3 The Governance and Audit Committee is required to make the final decision regarding the appointment of an External Co-opted Member.

6. Background Papers

6.1 Governance and Audit Committee November 2024 - [Agenda for Governance and Audit Committee on Wednesday, 27th November, 2024, 10.00 am | South Kesteven District Council](#)