

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Audit Committee – 28 July 2026

Report Title

Appointment of Audit Committee Vice-Chair

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jane Maxwell, Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

To appoint a Vice-Chair to the Audit Committee for the remainder of the 2026-27 Municipal Year following the resignation of Councillor Lelliott as appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 20th May, 2026.

Recommendations

(1) That Councillor Ismail be appointed Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee for the remainder of the 2026-27 Municipal Year.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Council – 09 September 2026

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Appointment of Audit Committee Vice-Chair

1. Background

- 1.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Council is required to appoint Chairs and Vice-Chairs to those Committees and bodies where such positions are prescribed. These appointments support the effective operation, governance and leadership of the Council's decision-making and oversight arrangements.
- 1.2 At the Annual Meeting of Council held on 20 May 2026, Councillor Lelliott was duly appointed as a Member and Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee. At the time of appointment, this was consistent with the Committee's Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 9, Section 5 of the Council's Constitution. The appointment ensured that the Committee had the required membership and leadership arrangements in place to undertake its responsibilities throughout the Municipal Year.
- 1.3 Since the Annual Meeting, Councillor Lelliott has resigned both as a Member of the Audit Committee and from the position of Vice-Chair. As a result, a vacancy has arisen within the Committee's membership and there is currently no appointed Vice-Chair to support the Chair and provide leadership continuity where required.
- 1.4 The vacancy presents an opportunity for Council to maintain the effectiveness of the Audit Committee by appointing a replacement Member and Vice-Chair. Filling these positions will ensure that the Committee continues to operate with its full complement of members, maintains appropriate leadership resilience, and is able to effectively discharge its responsibilities in relation to governance, risk management, internal control, financial reporting and audit matters.
- 1.5 Council is therefore asked to consider the available options and determine the most appropriate appointment arrangements for the remainder of the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 At the Annual Meeting of Council held on 20 May 2026, Councillor Lelliott was appointed as a Member of the Audit Committee and as its Vice-Chair in accordance with the Council's Constitution and the Committee's Terms of Reference. These appointments ensured that the Committee had the required membership and leadership arrangements in place to support its oversight of governance, risk management, internal control and audit matters.
- 2.2 Following the Annual Meeting, Councillor Lelliott formally resigned from the position of Vice-Chair and as a Member of the Audit Committee. This has created a vacancy within the Committee's elected membership and at this time the position of Vice-Chair.

- 2.3 In order to maintain the effective operation of the Audit Committee, Council is required to consider the appointment of an Elected Member to fill the vacant Committee position. Council is also asked to appoint a Vice-Chair to support the Chair in the discharge of the Committee's responsibilities and to provide leadership continuity in the event of the Chair's absence.
- 2.4 The Audit Committee comprises five Elected Members and two Independent Members. The Committee plays a key role within the Council's governance framework by providing independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and internal control arrangements. It also oversees internal and external audit activity and scrutinises the Council's financial reporting processes.
- 2.5 While the Committee remains quorate and capable of conducting its business, the current vacancy reduces its intended elected membership and limits the breadth of member participation in discussions and decision-making. Filling the vacancy would restore the Committee to its full membership and strengthen its capacity to undertake its responsibilities effectively.
- 2.6 The appointment of a Vice-Chair would further strengthen the Committee's resilience by ensuring appropriate leadership arrangements are in place throughout the remainder of the Municipal Year. The Vice-Chair provides support to the Chair, assists in maintaining continuity of business, and can fulfil the Chair's duties when required, helping to ensure the effective functioning of the Committee.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

Option one (Recommended):

- 3.1 That Councillor Ismail is appointed as a Member of the Audit Committee and to the position of Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

This is the preferred option as it will restore the Audit Committee to its full elected membership and ensure that appropriate leadership arrangements are in place. The appointment will strengthen the Committee's capacity and resilience, support continuity of business, and help ensure the continued effective discharge of its responsibilities in relation to governance, risk management, internal control and audit matters. It will also provide support to the Chair and maintain leadership continuity should the Chair be unavailable.

Option two:

- 3.2 That the Audit Committee continues to have a vacancy and no Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

This is not the preferred option as it would leave the Audit Committee with a vacant position and no Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2026/27 Municipal Year. Whilst the Committee would remain quorate and able to conduct its business, it would operate without its full complement of elected members and with reduced leadership resilience. This would place greater reliance on

existing Members and create a gap in leadership arrangements should the Chair be unavailable.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 There has been no consultation on the proposal.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 If approved at the 28th July Audit Committee, the appointment would be ratified at the 9th September Council meeting.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There were no direct implications relating to the appointment of the Vice-Chair to the Audit Committee for the remainder of the 2026/27 Municipal Year.
- 6.2 The Special Responsibility allowance payable for the Vice-Chair position is already accounted for within existing budgets.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications associated with this proposal beyond ensuring that the Council complied with the provisions of the Constitution.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no Human Resource implications associated with this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The appointment of Members to serve on Committees and other bodies of the Council may have an indirect impact on children and young people and vulnerable adults through the oversight, activities and decisions of those bodies. However, the recommendations contained within this report relate solely to Committee membership arrangements and there are no direct implications for children and young people or vulnerable adults arising from this decision.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 The recommendations contained within this report relate solely to the appointment of Members to Committee positions. There are no identified equality or human rights implications arising from this proposal.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 The recommendations contained within this report relate solely to committee membership arrangements. There are no identified implications for CO₂ emissions or climate change arising from this proposal.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 The recommendations contained within this report relate solely to Committee membership arrangements. There are no identified implications for partner organisations arising from this proposal.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 There is a risk that, without a Vice-Chair, the Audit Committee's leadership resilience could be reduced in the event of the Chair's absence. This risk would be mitigated through the appointment of a Vice-Chair, who would be able to support the Chair and provide continuity in the management of Committee business.

Accountable Officer

Dawn Mitchell, Governance Advisor

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