



County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Authority

**COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF THE AUDIT AND
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Fire and Rescue Authority

The Fire and Rescue Authority for County Durham and Darlington came into force on 20 November 1996 and was established under The Durham Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1996.

The Authority consists of 25 members (21 Durham and 4 Darlington Councillors). These figures are proportionate to the number of local government electors in its area. The Fire and Rescue Authority:

- Determines policy and strategy relating to the objectives of the authority and its priorities
- Approves the Community Risk Management Plan (CDMP) formerly the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)
- Approves the Authority's revenue and capital budget strategy, revenue and capital budgets, level of precept and statement of accounts
- Receives reports and recommendations from Authority Committees and reviews the structure and remit of Committees
- Ensuring the Authority fulfils its statutory duties including those under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004 and National Framework
- Fosters continuous service improvement
- Appoints the Chief Fire Officer and Principal Officers of the Fire and Rescue Service and the Treasurer, Clerk and Monitoring Officer of the Authority.

The Audit and Finance Committee

The Audit and Finance Committee is a key component of the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority's corporate governance. It provides an independent and high-level focus on audit, assurance and reporting

arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards. The establishment of the Audit and Finance Committee takes consideration of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) position statement and practical guidance on the function and operation of audit committees.

The Audit and Finance Committee has the following functions:

- Reviewing and approving the Authority's Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and Statement of Assurance.
- Discussing the nature and scope of the forthcoming audit with the external auditor.
- Receiving and commenting on the external auditor's Audit Strategy Memorandum, Audit Completion Report and Annual Audit letter.
- Receiving regular progress reports from Internal Audit and considering the issues and action plans arriving from any audit.
- Approving the Internal Audit Plan.
- Approving the Internal Audit Charter.
- Considering the report on the Annual Review of Internal Audit Effectiveness.
- Ensuring all auditors have the full cooperation of staff.
- Reviewing the Annual Governance Statement prior to its approval.
- Reviewing and reporting on corporate governance arrangements.
- Oversight of the risk management process and the Corporate Risk Register.
- Considering update reports on existing and emerging corporate risks.
- Considering reports from internal and external audits and inspections.
- Promoting the value of the audit process.
- Reviewing the counter fraud and corruption strategy to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and to gain assurance that the risk of fraud and any potential cases disclosed are effectively managed.
- To review the governance and assurance arrangements for significant partnerships or collaborations.
- Review and report on the quarterly and annual Financial Statements of the Authority.
- Consider and make recommendations to the Authority for the proposed revenue and capital budgets and Medium-Term Financial Plan.

- Consider any changes in the budget allocations arising from changes in the strategic policies and service plans.
- Consider any proposals for growth or budget reductions.
- Consider the revenue and capital budgets, Medium-Term Financial Plan, council tax levels and associated information prior to approval by the Authority.
- Consider the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy and on-going performance.

Personal Requirements

Applicants should have a good general education and ideally have a financial, accountancy, risk management or audit background preferably from within a large or public sector organisation. They should be of good character and able to demonstrate the highest standard of personal integrity and conduct. Applicants should have sound common sense and the ability to absorb, understand and analyse written and verbal information and be capable of reaching objective and reasoned decisions.