



Joint Audit Committee

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

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Welcome from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer



The work of the Joint Audit Committee is of great value to all three organisations. One of the key responsibilities on behalf of the public is to ensure the effective and efficient use and accounting for public money allocated to Policing and Fire and Rescue Services within the county. This is a highly complex and constantly changing financial landscape and it is therefore essential that we have effective and challenging scrutiny of our financial processes.

We believe we are blessed in the OPFCC, Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service in having highly professional and dedicated staff who do an excellent job, this is complemented by a rigorous, expert panel in the Joint Audit Committee who in turn conduct independent assurance on a range of OPFCC, Constabulary and Fire and Rescue functions and most especially our accounts. This provides us with additional assurance which we are able to pass onto the public that our administration and financial processes are effective, efficient and their probity is assured.

The independence, complementary skills and conscientious approach of the committee to their role facilitates robust scrutiny and challenge which contributes to the OPFCC, Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service achieving our objectives, and being an efficient and effective policing and fire and rescue service. This assurance that governance within the Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service is effective and supports the delivery of an outstanding policing and fire and rescue service for the people of Cumbria is important. There are of course always things we can improve and we are grateful to the Chair and members of JAC for their robust scrutiny and guidance when they find matters which need to be addressed and improved.

David Allen

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria

Robert Carden

Chief Constable of Cumbria Constabulary

Richard Ogden

Chief Fire Officer of Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service

A word from our Chair

I have had the pleasure of serving on the Joint Audit Committee since April 2015 and took over as chair of the committee in 2021. The Committee is an independent body, and its purpose is to provide advice and assurance on the overall arrangements for governance in respect of the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC), the Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS). It seeks to achieve this by holding the mirror up to the OPFCC, Constabulary and CFRS, by reviewing arrangements in respect of Governance, Audit, Regulation, Financial Reporting and Risk Management.

We have an annual work programme that includes both routine and thematic activities through which we always seek to promote the improvement and value adding aspects of audit, governance, financial reporting and risk management. We will challenge issues and actions where we believe there could have been an improvement, recognising and highlighting areas of good practice, whilst helping to promote a wider understanding and awareness of the OPFCCs, Constabulary's and Fire and Rescue Service's overall governance framework.

The role of member of the Joint Audit Committee is an important role that makes a significant contribution to public assurance about the integrity, internal controls and standards that are adhered to within these public offices. The conduct of the Committee will also inform the opinion of the internal and external auditor in respect of the Annual Governance Statement. The work of the Committee will be subject to an annual review of its effectiveness and all members will be expected to undertake due diligence in scrutinising Committee papers and actively participating in Committee meetings to support and challenge constructively the arrangements of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC), the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer.

Although the Committee membership is drawn from a diverse range of backgrounds and experience, we have two things in common; we and our families all live in and around the county of Cumbria and are committed to seeing the area thrive. We all share a strong desire to help ensure that the OPFCC, Cumbria Constabulary and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service continue to deliver high quality services to the public, ensuring that our county continues to be a safe and secure place to live.

Being part of the committee is a rewarding and fulfilling experience, helping to build public confidence in Cumbria Constabulary and I hope you will consider joining us.

Fiona Moore

Joint Audit Committee Chair

About the Joint Audit Committee

The purpose of the Joint Audit Committee (JAC) is to provide those charged with governance (namely the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable) independent assurance and advice on the overall arrangements for governance in respect of the Office of the PFCC (OPFCC), the Constabulary and the Fire and Rescue Service. This includes the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment, and the integrity of the financial reporting and annual governance processes. The Joint Audit Committee is a key component of governance.

The terms of reference for the Committee set out a statement of purpose and the key responsibilities in respect of Audit, Regulation, Financial Reporting and Risk Management. The role profile for a Joint Audit Committee Member sets out the job purpose / key responsibilities for the role including how members will contribute to the achievement of the Committee's purpose, the conduct of meetings and Committee culture.

By having a Joint Audit Committee, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer are making a public commitment to sound financial management and internal control. Promoting openness, transparency and public confidence.

The committee decide upon an annual work programme to enable it to fulfil its terms of reference and balance its workload across the year.

The Committee is comprised of up to six appointed Members, one of whom takes the role of Chair of the Committee. The Committee operates with a quorum of three members.

Meetings are open to the public and are held four or five times a year. For the 2024/25 financial year the meetings are June, September, February (moved from November) & March). The agenda and reports are published on the Commissioner's website before each meeting. Standing orders will provide for business to be conducted in public in the interests of openness and transparency. The Committee have provision to consider items privately where the information being considered is restricted.

Committee meetings are supplemented by periodic development sessions to ensure that members have a sufficient understanding of wider OPFCC/Constabulary/Fire & Rescue Service business and organisational knowledge appropriate to their role. Members will be encouraged to consider the subject matter of seminar sessions as a contribution to the effectiveness of the Committee. Members are also supported in their role by officers of the OPFCC, Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service who regularly attend committee meetings.

Further information regarding the Committee, its membership, and the work it carries out can be found on the Commissioner's website:

<https://cumbria-pfcc.gov.uk/finance-governance/budget-finance/joint-audit-committee>







The arrangements for the Committee are based on the requirements of the Home Office Financial Management Code of Practice (the Code), the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Audit Committee guidance (including terms of reference) and the HM Treasury Audit Committee handbook. JAC is a joint Committee of the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service as advocated by the Code.

Since its inception in 2012, the committee has delivered a significant programme of work on planned and responsive basis. The work programme includes regular activities in relation to Governance, Risk & Control, Internal Audit, External Audit & Inspection, Financial Reporting Accountability and Treasury Management to ensure it fulfils its Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference for the Committee is available on the Commissioners website. A biennial report of the effectiveness of the committee is produced and published on the Committee's page of the Commissioner's website.

As a result of Local Government Reorganisation in Cumbria, from April 2023 the role of the committee was expanded to include responsibilities for Fire as a result of the Commissioner taking over the governance of Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service by becoming the Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority.

Work of the Committee

Detailed below is a brief overview of the work of the committee against key theses within the terms of reference:

	<p>Governance, Risk and Control</p> <p>Members will review corporate governance arrangements against best practice, including annual governance statements. Review arrangements to secure value for money. Consider the framework of assurance and risk management to ensure that it supports the achievement of the objectives of the OPFCC, Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service. Review reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and arrangements to prevent fraud and corruption.</p>		<p>Financial Reporting</p> <p>The Committee reviews the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit of the financial statements that need to be brought to the attention of the Commissioner and/or the Chief Constable or the Commissioner and/or the Chief Fire Officer. As part of this, the Committee considers the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the financial statements.</p>
	<p>Treasury Management</p> <p>The Committee reviews the treasury management policy and procedures to be satisfied that controls are satisfactory including reviewing the treasury risk profile and adequacy of treasury risk management processes. The Committee also receive regular reports on activities, issues and trends to support the Committee's understanding of treasury management activities; the committee is not responsible for the regular monitoring of activity.</p>		<p>Accountability</p> <p>Report to the Commissioner, the Chief Constable, the Chief Fire Officer with advice and recommendations in relation to any matters that it considers relevant to governance, risk management and financial management. Review and report the performance of the Committee against its terms of reference, objectives and compliance with CIPFA best practice.</p>
	<p>External Audit & Inspection</p> <p>Advise on the selection and appointment of external auditors. Review external audit work and consider the external audit management letter and other relevant reports including inspection reports e.g. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).</p>		<p>Internal Audit</p> <p>Oversee the appointment and monitor the performance of the internal audit service. Receive all audit reports, including the annual opinion and contribute to the development of the internal audit plan.</p>

The Role and What We Are Looking For:

This is a unique role and a great opportunity to be involved in providing assurance to the communities of Cumbria that the service they are receiving from policing and fire are the best they can be. The purpose of the Committee is to provide independent advice and recommendations to all three organisations on the adequacy of the governance and risk management frameworks, the internal control environment and financial reporting; thereby helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

Eligibility

The following restrictions will apply to ensure the complete independence and objectivity of members of the Committee in the conduct of business.

- Must be over 18 years of age.
- Must not be Serving Police Officers and Police Staff and former Police Officers/Staff (within the last 2 years as at 01/04/25).
- Must not be Serving Fire Officers and Fire Staff and former Fire Officers/Staff (within the last 2 years as at 01/04/25).
- Must not have worked as a consultant for the Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Service or the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner within the last 2 years.
- Must not be serving members on the Cumbria Police, Fire and Crime Panel (within the last 2 years as at 01/04/25).
- Must not be individuals who have significant business or personal dealings with the Constabulary/Fire & Rescue Service/OPFCC.
- Must not be individuals who have close relationships with any of the above including immediate family members.
- Must not be involved in a complaint or disciplinary process within the last 5 years of the matter being finalised.

Member Key Responsibilities:

- To contribute to the effective discharge of the duties and responsibilities of the committee as set out in the committee terms of reference.
- To maintain effective working relationships with committee members, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable, the Chief Fire Officer, Section 151 officers (PFCC/CCFRA Chief Finance Officer and Constabulary Chief Finance Officer) and both internal and external auditors.
- To be diligent in preparing for committee meetings and making an effective contribution to those meetings to provide independent assurance of the governance, internal control and finance, risk and performance management arrangements of the OPFCC, Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service.

Experience and Knowledge:

Applicants are asked to provide examples in relation to the following areas. We have indicated those which we feel are essential and others which are desirable [(**e**) - essential / (**d**) – desirable]. If you do not have any of the desirable elements this should not prevent you from applying as we are looking for individuals who have different skills.

- Sound experience of strategic planning, risk management and performance management (e),
- Ability to assure financial and statistical information (e),
- Experience of leading or conducting or reviewing audit activity (e),
- Experience of scrutinising financial information and processes (e),
- Knowledge of best practices in governance & internal control (e),
- Good understanding of the roles of internal and external audit (e),
- Practical experience in the financial and / or general management of businesses or public sector organisations (d),
- Experience of a Local government Environment (d),
- Audit Committee (or equivalent) experience (d).

Don't think you meet every single requirement? Studies have shown that some people are less likely to apply for roles unless they meet every single qualification and criteria. We are committed to building a diverse, inclusive, and authentic committee, so if you're excited about this role but your experience doesn't align perfectly with every requirement above, please apply anyway - you may just be the right candidate for this role.

We would be particularly keen to hear from females and people who identify with one of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010; and applications from anyone who has financial qualifications and/or recent audit committee experience.

Please note, committee members will be expected to be IT literate and have an electronic device, such as laptop or tablet, to allow for committee papers to be provided by electronic means and to be utilised at committee meetings.

Important Information

Tenure

Committee members will be recruited for a tenure of 5 years, with a possibility of extending for a second 5 year term, to a maximum of 10 years. This appointment will commence on 1 April 2025 and is for a period of 5 years up to 31 March 2030. Extension for a second 5 year term is not automatic and will be made following a review and is at the discretion of Chief Officers.

Vetting

All members of the committee will be subject to vetting clearance and the provision of references prior to final confirmation of appointment being made. Applicants must have been a resident in the United Kingdom for 3 years prior to the date of their application.

Confidentiality

Committee members will be required not to disclose information which they are provided with as part of their work.

Member Attendance

The committee will meet four or five times per annum, with additional meetings if required. Members will be required to make a commitment to attend at least 3 meetings annually and to attend provided training in relation to their role.

Remuneration

Committee members will be remunerated at the following rates for their attendance at meetings.

- £275.05 full day (sitting of more than 4 hours (excluding meal breaks)
- £136.27 half day (sitting of less than 4 hours (excluding meal breaks)

An allowance of one full day will be awarded to compensate for time taken to review papers/preparatory work in respect of every formal Joint Audit Committee meeting attended. This is irrespective of the amount of time actually taken to undertake preparation. Committee members will be reimbursed reasonable expenses including travel (within Cumbria and outside the County for approved training/events) and subsistence. The current mileage rate set at 45p per mile.

The Application Process

Equality and diversity monitoring will be given full due regard at every stage of the recruitment process. Appointments will be based on the role profile and person specification requirements in addition to the need to ensure a balance of skills and expertise across all fields of committee responsibility. It is intended that at least one member of the Committee will have a professional qualification from one of the professional accountancy bodies.

The recruitment panel will comprise of four people on behalf of both the Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Service and the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. All appointments will be subject to the satisfactory completion of the vetting and reference stages followed by confirmation by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer.

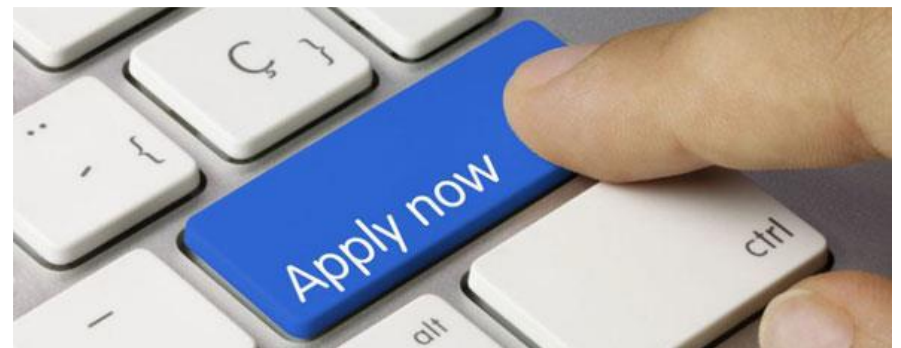
Individuals interested in becoming a member of the Joint Audit Committee should submit a CV that provides details of relevant experience for the role. CVs should be submitted using the link on the Constabulary Jobs Portal at [Search for Jobs \(webitrent.com\)](https://www.webitrent.com).

CVs will be used as the basis of shortlisting. Appointments will be made following a formal interview.

Applications must be returned using the online application process by **12 noon on Monday 18th November 2024**. Shortlisting will be carried out during the week of 18th November with interviews for this post being held **during week commencing 25th November 2024**.

Successful appointments will take up their role in April 2025 (first meeting 25th June 2025, with the option to attend the meeting on 26th March 2025 as an observer).

An induction session to the work of the OPFCC, Constabulary and Fire and Rescue will be arranged in 2025.



Following Appointment

Upon appointment members will be asked to:

- Sign a Code of Conduct
- Declare any interests relevant to Cumbria Constabulary, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service or the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC); these to be retained by the OPFCC.
- Agree to have their name and a short synopsis of their experience published on the OPFCC website.

Individuals should have or acquire as soon as possible after appointment an understanding of the objectives and current significant issues for the Police and Fire and Rescue Services at a national and local level and an understanding of the objectives, responsibilities and current significant issues for the Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Service and Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

Data Protection



As part of the recruitment process you will provide us with personal and special categories data. This information will only be used as part of the recruitment, and where appropriate, appointment process. If you are unsuccessful at the shortlisting or interview stage your data will only be retained for 12 months following the date of decision. This is in line with our Retention Policy, which can be found on our website: <https://cumbriacms.formationcraft.co.uk/uploads/OPFCC-Retention-Schedule-2024.pdf>

The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is provided with HR support and Financial Services support by Cumbria Constabulary. If you are appointed your data will be shared with the Constabulary to enable vetting to be carried out and progress your application through to appointment.

Further information on how the OPFCC deals with information can be found on our website: <https://cumbria-pfcc.gov.uk/finance-governance/dpa>