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**AUDIT COMMITTEE: 12 November 2019**

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**IAN ARUNDALE-LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST**

**AGENDA ITEM: 4.1**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

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**Reason for this Report**

1. For the Audit Committee to consider a request from Ian Arundale, Audit Committee Chairperson, for a leave of absence of up to one year.
2. The report provides the Audit Committee with an opportunity to note the request and to consider recommending its approval to Council.

**Background**

3. In accordance with section 82 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the Audit Committee is required to have at least one lay member, and at least two thirds of the Audit Committee are to be members of the authority.
4. The Audit Committee is currently comprised of eight Councillors (5 Labour, 2 Conservative and 1 Liberal Democrat) and four Independent Lay Members. At the time of reporting there are two Labour Councillor vacancies on the Committee,
5. Ian Arundale has served as a Member of the Audit Committee from 25 June 2014 and as Chairperson since 22 June 2015. Council has approved his reappointment to the Audit Committee for a second term the period 25 June 2019 to 24 June 2024.

**Issues**

6. The Chairperson, Ian Arundale, has recently discussed short-term capacity issues with the Head of Democratic Services and Audit Manager, and shared his intention to request a temporary leave of absence. On 26 October 2019, he wrote to formalise his intentions and has set out his reasons in the following request:

Leave of Absence Request

In addition to my role as the Chair of the Audit Committee I have other professional responsibilities. Normally, these duties are easy to accommodate with little, if any, conflict with my committee duties. I remain fully committed to my role and I am keen to retain my position.

However, I have recently been invited to take up the position of Deputy Chief Constable with Cleveland Police. This organisation has just been placed in full 'special measures' and has considerable challenges and identified areas for improvement. I have received formal permission from Cleveland Police to continue

with my Audit Committee role but it has become clear that the scope and volume of my duties at Cleveland cannot currently be managed alongside my Audit Committee responsibilities.

I therefore request that I be granted formal leave of absence for a period of up to one year to be reviewed in six months time. I am on a short term (18 month) contract with Cleveland police that can be cancelled with three months notice by either party. If granted, an approved leave of absence should enable me to recommence my duties once the workload at Cleveland has stabilised.

### Process

7. Council determines the size and membership of the Audit Committee and has the authority to approve a leave of absence request.
8. Prior to the Council decision, the Audit Committee has an opportunity to consider the request, and to determine if it will recommend the approval to Full Council on 28 November 2019.
9. Following the Council decision, in its meeting of 21 January 2020, the Audit Committee will need to appoint a Chairperson to cover any formalised absence for the current municipal year.

### **Legal Implications**

10. There are no legal implications other than those set out at paragraph 3 of this report.

### **Financial Implications**

11. There are no direct financial Implications arising from this report.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

12. That the Audit Committee:
  - Notes the Audit Committee Chairperson's request for a leave of absence of up to a year;
  - Consider recommending approval of the request to Full Council.

### **THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

12 November 2019