



Huon Valley Council – Role Description

Audit Panel – Independent Member & Chairperson

<p>PRIMARY PURPOSE</p>	<p>The primary purpose of the Audit Panel is to assist Council and the General Manager in providing an independent process in its financial and risk management practices to ensure accountability to the community in the governance, management and allocation of resources, and to ensure there is an adequate and effective system of internal controls throughout Council.</p>
<p>ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES</p>	<p>The function of the Huon Valley Council Audit Panel is to review the Council's performance with regard to the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the annual financial statements of the Council accurately representing the state of affairs of the Council; • the strategic plan, annual plan, long term strategic asset management plans of the Council being integrated and the processes by which, and assumptions under which, those plans were prepared are appropriate; • the accounting, internal control, anti-fraud, anti-corruption and risk management policies, systems and controls that the Council has in relation to safeguarding its long-term financial position are appropriate; • ensuring the Council is complying with the provisions of the Act and any other relevant legislation; • ensuring the Council has taken action in relation to previous recommendations provided by the Audit Panel to the Council and, if it has so taken action, what that action was and its effectiveness; and • enquiring into any other activities within the Panel's remit. <p>In carrying out the functions above regard may be had to any guidelines issued by the Director of Local Government in relation to Audit Panels.</p>
<p>MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES</p>	<p>Members of the Audit Panel are expected to understand and observe the legal requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and <i>Local Government (Audit Panels) Order 2014</i>. Members are also expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act in the best interests of the Council; • Apply sound analytical skills, objectivity and judgement; • Express opinions constructively and openly, raise issues that relate to the Audit Panels' functions and pursue independent lines of enquiry; • Contribute to the time required to review the papers provided; • Comply with any Code of Conduct for Members of the Audit Panel as adopted by the Council from time to time; and • Maintain confidentiality of the Panel's proceedings.

<p>LIMITS OF AUTHORITY</p>	<p>Subject to there being sufficient available funds in the budget allocated by the Council for the operations of the Audit Panel, the Council authorises the Panel, within its scope of functions and responsibilities, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • obtain any information it needs from any employee and/or external party (subject to the Panel’s legal obligation to protect information); • discuss any matters with the internal or external auditor, or other external parties (subject to confidentiality considerations); • request the attendance of the General Manager or any other Council employee at panel meetings; and • obtain external, legal or other professional advice at the expense of the council where it considers such consultation is necessary to carry out its functions and responsibilities. <p>The General Manager, the internal auditors and the external auditors will have direct access to the Panel Chairperson for the purpose of raising concerns about matters within the functions and responsibilities of the Panel.</p>
<p>SELECTION CRITERIA</p>	<p>An Independent Member will possess one or more of the following skills and attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one or more of a professional qualification and practical experience in accounting, financial management, governance, engineering, asset management, legal, risk management and/or compliance experience; • knowledge and expertise in the areas of audit practices and financial management and reporting; • knowledge of, and experience in, relevant industries; and • strong business acumen and sound management and communication skills. <p>In addition to desirable skills and experience of a member the audit panel chairperson will possess the following skills and attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of the position, especially with respect to local government financial reporting and auditing requirements; • requisite local government knowledge, and financial, governance and leadership skills; • an ability to build good relationships; and • strong communication skills.
<p>PERFORMANCE STANDARDS</p>	<p>The Chair of the Audit Panel, in consultation with the Council, will initiate a review of the performance of the Panel at least once every two years.</p> <p>The review will be conducted on a self-assessment basis (unless otherwise determined by the Council) with appropriate input sought from Panel members, the General Manager, the internal and external auditors, management and any other relevant stakeholders, as determined by the Council.</p> <p>The Panel will report to the Council the results of the evaluation and the manner in which it proposes to remedy any deficiencies that may be disclosed by the evaluation.</p>