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| Meeting | Full Council |
| Date | 3 July 2025 |
| Subject | Recommendation of the Interview Panel – Appointment of Lay Member of the Governance and Audit Committee |
| Chair of the Panel | Councillor Ioan Thomas |
| Author | Head of Finance |

1. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 has modified the Local Government Measure 2011 in relation to the governance and audit committees of Welsh local authorities.
2. Since May 2022 at least a third of the Committee's members must be lay members (and the Chair must be one of those lay members).
3. At its meeting on 2 December 2021, full Council decided that the Governance and Audit Committee will have 18 members, with 12 members being members of Gwynedd Council and 6 lay members from May 2022.
4. The relevant report can be found here:
[Item 11 - Local Government and Elections Wales Act 2021 - Audit and Governance Committee.pdf \(llyw.cymru\)](#)
5. The Council's Constitution states that lay members of the Governance and Audit Committee must be appointed by the full Council on the recommendation of an appointment panel.
6. At its meeting on 3 March 2022, the full Council appointed 4 lay members of the Governance and Audit Committee, namely Mr Hywel Eifion Jones, Mrs Sharon Warnes, Mr Rhys Parry and Mrs Clare Hitchcock. A further lay member, Mrs Carys Edwards, was appointed on 1 December 2022.
7. That meant that one lay member's seat remained vacant. Mrs Clare Hitchcock resigned as a lay member at the end of December 2024 due to work commitments and in May 2025 the extremely sad news of the death of Mrs Sharon Warnes, who had served as a lay member of the Committee since 2017, was received. Therefore, three vacant seats now need to be filled.
8. Thirteen names were received in the latest round of advertising and a shortlist of 6 names was compiled by disregarding applications that had not answered basic questions on the application form on experiences in the field of governance. Unfortunately, two individuals withdrew their names ahead of the interviews so on 20 and 23 June, four candidates were interviewed by a panel consisting of the Chair of the Council (Councillor Ioan Thomas), the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee (Councillor Anne Lloyd-Jones) and the Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Huw Wyn Jones). Advising the panel were the Statutory Finance Officer (Dewi Morgan) and the Monitoring Officer (Iwan Evans).

9. After careful and thorough consideration of the application, the Panel decided that the 3 applicants met the criteria, and it should be recommended to the full Council that Dr Peter Barnes, Mr Dewi Lewis and Mr Paul Millar-Mills be appointed as lay members of the Committee.
10. Dr Peter Barnes lives in Dolgellau and runs a business in the town with his wife after a long academic career. He was an independent member of Dolgellau Town Council for a time and has worked as a lecturer, trainer, group leader and member of various rescue groups. Dr Barnes has also been a magazine editor for 3 years.
11. Mr Dewi Lewis has extensive experience of local government, the third sector and private business. He was a member of Gwynedd Council until July 2011 and served on the Council Board. He was the owner of Siop Dewi in Penrhyndeudraeth from 1979 to 2024. Mr Lewis is no longer a member of any political party.
12. Mr Paul Millar-Mills is an experienced businessman and although semi-retired he continues to run a shop in Pwllheli and has spent his career self-employed in the Cheshire and Gwynedd areas. He has experience of being a member and Chairman of a Traders Association.

Recommendation

To appoint Dr Peter Barnes, Mr Dewi Lewis a Mr Paul Millar-Mills as Lay Members of the Governance and Audit Committee for the next five years, subject to receiving acceptable references.

Views of the local member

Not a local issue

Views of statutory officers

Monitoring Officer:

I can confirm that the Panel has carried out its functions appropriately and in accordance with the arrangements which were established by the Council for appointing lay members of the Governance and Audit Committee.

Head of Finance:

Author of the report