



## **Independent Chair Audit and Standards Advisory Committee Candidate Recruitment Pack**

### **Welcome**

Thank you for your interest in becoming the Independent Chair of Brent Council's Audit and Standards Advisory Committee.

This is an important public appointment. The Committee sits at the heart of the Council's governance and assurance arrangements, providing independent oversight, constructive challenge and advice across audit, risk, internal control, financial management, governance and member standards.

We are looking for an experienced and credible chair who can lead the Committee fairly and effectively, work confidently with elected members and senior officers, and maintain the independence and objectivity essential to the role. You will need to be comfortable engaging with complex and sometimes sensitive matters, while keeping the Committee focused on the quality of assurance, the effectiveness of governance and the public interest.

This pack explains the opportunity, the requirements of the role and how to apply. We welcome applications from candidates with relevant senior-level experience across the public, regulatory, voluntary or private sectors.

### **The Opportunity**

As Independent Chair, you will provide visible, impartial and effective leadership to the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee. You will help the Committee make the best use of its collective expertise, focus its challenge on the matters that most affect the Council's governance and assurance, and reach clear, evidence-based conclusions and recommendations.

## **At a glance**

- Lead meetings in a fair, inclusive and purposeful way.
- Set the tone for constructive support and robust challenge.
- Help shape the Committee's work programme and maintain focus on the most significant governance and assurance issues.
- Build effective relationships with elected members, senior officers, internal and external auditors and other assurance providers.
- Promote high standards of conduct, integrity, openness and accountability.
- Provide an independent perspective while understanding the political and organisational context in which the Council operates.

## **About the Committee**

The Audit and Standards Advisory Committee is a key component of Brent Council's governance framework. It considers and advises the relevant Council bodies on governance matters relating to audit activity, the Council's regulatory framework and members' standards of conduct.

Its work includes oversight and challenge in relation to

- Corporate governance and public accountability.
- Risk management and internal control.
- Internal and external audit.
- Financial reporting and stewardship.
- Counter-fraud, bribery and anti-corruption arrangements.
- The Annual Governance Statement and Statement of Accounts.
- Ethical standards and member conduct.

The Committee normally meets at Brent Civic Centre. Meeting papers are published through the Council's democracy portal and meetings are generally held in public, subject to statutory arrangements for exempt or confidential information.

**[View the Committee's details, meetings and published papers](#)**

## Person Specification

The Chair of the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee will:

- Have significant senior-level experience in governance, audit, finance, risk management, regulation or leadership within a large, complex organisation
- Have experience of chairing boards, committees or other senior decision-making forums and be able to lead meetings effectively, fairly and impartially.
- Demonstrate a strong understanding of corporate governance, internal control, risk management, assurance and public accountability.
- Be able to understand, analyse and challenge complex reports, data, financial information and assurance opinions.
- Promote a culture of constructive challenge, openness and accountability.
- Demonstrate sound judgement and the ability to balance support and challenge while maintaining independence and objectivity.
- Be capable of building effective working relationships with elected members, senior officers, internal and external auditors and regulators, whilst maintaining appropriate independence.
- Understand the importance of high standards of ethical behaviour, member conduct and public confidence in local government.
- Be able to operate effectively within a political environment whilst maintaining a clear non-political and impartial approach.
- Demonstrate strong communication, influencing and interpersonal skills.
- Understand and comply with confidentiality requirements and information governance obligations.
- Be committed to the Seven Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- Be available to attend committee meetings, planning meetings and associated briefings, together with any relevant training and development activities.
- Be familiar with audit and financial frameworks, including CIPFA guidance, the Financial Management Code, Annual Governance Statement requirements, National Audit Office guidance, Financial Reporting Council standards and wider Local Government governance and accountability requirements.
- Have knowledge of ethics, standards and conduct frameworks applicable to elected members.
- Have an understanding of the role of scrutiny, assurance and governance committees within local authorities.

## **Desirable Criteria**

- Have a connection to Brent i.e., live in and/or work in Brent or have some other recognisable ties to the area. ·
- Have technical knowledge of local government governance, finance, audit, risk management or standards arrangements.
- Have an awareness of and sensitivity to the political process.

## **Eligibility for Appointment**

- **Members' Code of Conduct:** Agree to observe the Members' Code of Conduct.
- **Time Commitment:** Commit to a four-year term of office, subject to annual review, and attend approximately six meetings per year, plus any required briefings, training, workshops or extraordinary meetings, and undertake necessary preparation and follow-up work.
- **Conflicts of Interest:** Declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest. These will be assessed to determine whether they affect suitability or can be appropriately managed.
- **Independence and Political Activity:** Must be, and be seen to be, independent of the Council's political and management arrangements. The successful candidate must not be an elected Member, co-opted member, officer or employee of the Council; or a relative/their close friend. They must declare and manage relevant interests; and must maintain political neutrality