



## **INFORMATION PACK FOR INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE AND INDEPENDENT PERSON FOR STANDARDS**

**This pack provides information for candidates regarding the appointment of Independent Members of the Audit and Risk Committee and an Independent Person for Standards for Islington Council, including information on how to apply.**

**Please note that applications need to be received no later than 9.00am on Friday 15 November 2024**

# Audit and Risk Committee

## Composition

The Audit and Risk Committee is composed of five councillors and two independent members.

## Purpose

The Audit and Risk Committee is a key component of Islington Council's corporate governance. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

The purpose of the Audit and Risk Committee is to provide assurance to members of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment. It provides independent review of the council's governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

The Audit and Risk Committee will aid the achievement of the Council's goals and objectives through the effective oversight of the council's corporate governance arrangements.

## Terms of Reference

To consider the following matters and to make recommendations concerning them to the relevant Council bodies or to officers:

1. The Head of Internal Audit's annual report and opinion and the level of assurance internal audit activity can give over the Council's corporate governance arrangements;
2. The external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts;
3. Reports dealing with the management, performance and value for money of the providers of internal and external audit services;
4. A report from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale;
5. The appointment of the Council's external auditor;
6. Work to be commissioned from internal and external audit;
7. Specific internal and external audit reports as requested;

8. To advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspection agencies or relevant bodies;
9. The external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years;
10. The Council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls;
11. The arrangements to secure value for money in procurement and commissioning and to review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements;
12. To review the governance and assurance arrangements for formal partnership agreements, where this is not reserved for another body;
13. Any issue referred to it by the Council, Executive, Corporate Resources and Economy Scrutiny Committee or the Chief Executive relating to the audit or governance of the council's affairs;
14. The Council's arrangements for corporate governance and risk management and recommend necessary actions to ensure compliance with the good governance framework, including the ethical framework, Local Code of Corporate Governance, and best practice;
15. The effectiveness of the council's frameworks for programme governance and associated project management;
16. The production and content of the authority's Annual Governance Statement;
17. The assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the council from fraud and corruption, and to consider strategies and actions to reduce such risks including a proactive fraud detection strategy;
18. To consider a report on the effectiveness of internal audit to support the Annual Governance Statement, where required to do so by the Accounts and Audit Regulations;
19. Any report on any matter relevant to the advisory functions of the Committee which the Committee may request from the Corporate Director of Resources or other proper officer.
20. To receive a report every six months detailing any non-contractual special severance payments made to Chief Officers appointed by members, in excess of £50,000, if any have been made in the relevant period.
21. To review and agree the annual statement of accounts, including considering whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the council.
22. To adopt the authority's Annual Governance Statement.
23. To agree the Internal Audit Charter and Internal Audit Plan;

24. To agree annually the amount calculated by the Council as its tax base for the whole area of the borough, any tax base applying as special levies, and other matters associated with the tax base.
25. To maintain the contract procedure rules and financial regulations in the Council's constitution;
26. To ensure that the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee has appropriate access to the Head of Internal Audit on matters within the committee's terms of reference;
27. To make appointments between council meetings to those outside bodies and panels appointed to by the Council under Part 3 paragraph 7.2.
28. To determine the following matters relating to the organisation and conduct of elections,
  - i. division of the constituency into polling districts;
  - ii. division of the borough into polling districts.
  - iii. Other matters referred to the Committee by the Head of Electoral Services.
29. To receive an annual report on the Council's usage of its powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA);
30. To consider matters relating to the introduction, amendment or revocation of byelaws and to make recommendations on byelaws for Council to formally approve, as required.

## **Job Description – Independent Members of the Audit and Risk Committee**

### **The role**

To be an independent member of the Audit and Risk Committee, providing external challenge, support and advice.

### **Accountability**

To the council through the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

### **Responsibilities**

- To receive and consider reports to the Audit and Risk Committee from internal and external auditors and other council officers.
- To ensure the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director of Resources (the council's chief finance officer) are aware of the significance of issues raised in the Audit or by its members.
- To obtain and maintain appropriate understanding of the organisation which is vital to the Audit and Risk Committee considerations.
- To provide support and direction to the Audit and Risk Committee members.
- To demonstrate high standards of corporate governance at all times, including by understanding the role played by the Audit and Risk Committee in helping to address the key financial and other risks facing the council.

## Person Specification – Independent Members of the Audit Committee

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualifications</b>		
Financial, Accounting or Audit qualification	X	
<b>Knowledge and skills</b>		
A good communicator	X	
Inquisitive, open minded and non-judgemental	X	
Ability to analyse information and question effectively	X	
Assertiveness	X	
Understanding of the committee's main functions and principles of good corporate and financial governance	X	
<b>Experience</b>		
Experience of committee work and/or operating in a political environment		X
Interest in public service and local government	X	
Lives in and/or works in Islington		X
A demonstrable interest in local issues	X	
<b>Competencies</b>		
A person in whose impartiality and integrity the public can have confidence	X	
Ability and willingness to maintain confidentiality	X	
Able to make a significant contribution to the work of the committee	X	
<b>Other requirements</b>		
Has not been a councillor or employee of Islington Council in the past five years	X	
Is not related to or close friend of an Islington member or employee	X	
Is not an active member of any political party or have a public profile in relation to political activities	X	
Must formally agree to observe the Code of Conduct for members and complete a Register of Interests form on appointment	X	
Must be able to attend committee meetings as programmed (approximately six evening meetings per year, held at Islington Town Hall)	X	
Must be committed to a four-year term of office	X	

# Standards Committee

## Composition

The Standards Committee shall comprise four members.

Independent Persons have been appointed by the council under the Localism Act 2011. Although not members of the Committee the Independent Persons are invited to attend meetings of the committee as observers.

## Terms of Reference

- 1 To advise the Council on a local Code of Conduct for members.
- 2 To decide, if requested to do so by the Monitoring Officer, whether complaints that a member of the Council has failed, or may have failed, to comply with the Council's Members' Code of Conduct should be investigated.
- 3 To hear complaints that a member of the Council has failed, or may have failed, to comply with the Council's Members' Code of Conduct that have been referred to them by the Monitoring Officer pursuant to the Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure.
- 4 To agree relevant procedures for hearing complaints that a member of the Council has failed, or may have failed, to comply with the Council's Members' Code of Conduct;
5. To receive the Annual report on Member Standards and Conduct.
6. To consider requests for dispensations from all members in respect of statutory and non-statutory disclosable interests.

## Job Description – Independent Person for Standards

When any complaint about a possible breach of the Code of Conduct by a Councillor is made, the Monitoring Officer will consult the Independent Person about either whether it is appropriate to seek an informal resolution; not to investigate the matter further or to carry out an investigation.

The Monitoring Officer can ask the Independent Person to produce a report for the Committee setting out their views on the Investigating Officers report.

## Person Specification– Independent Person for Standards

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Knowledge and skills</b>		
A good communicator	X	
Inquisitive, open minded and non-judgemental	X	
Ability to analyse information and question effectively	X	
Assertiveness	X	
Understanding of the committee’s main functions	X	
<b>Experience</b>		
Experience of committee work and/or operating in a political environment		X
Interest in public service and local government	X	
Lives in and/or works in Islington		X
A demonstrable interest in local issues	X	
<b>Competencies</b>		
A person in whose impartiality and integrity the public can have confidence	X	
Ability and willingness to maintain confidentiality	X	
Able to make a significant contribution to the work of the committee	X	
<b>Other requirements</b>		
Has not been a councillor or employee of Islington Council in the past five years	X	
Is not related to or close friend of an Islington member or employee	X	
Is not an active member of any political party or have a public profile in relation to political activities	X	
Must formally agree to observe the Code of Conduct for members and complete a Register of Interests form on appointment	X	
Must be able to attend committee meetings as programmed	X	
Must be committed to a four-year term of office	X	



## Terms and Conditions of Appointment

The appointment is for four years and will be subject to approval of Full Council.

The duties include attendance at committee meetings. The Audit and Risk Committee meets approximately six times per municipal year, and there may be additional meetings. Typically, the committee starts from 7.00pm. The Standards Committee meets twice a year, and additional meetings may be held as required. You will also be required to allocate time to read papers in preparation of the meeting. There may be additional duties, such as attending training courses or attendance at other meetings from time to time.

Subject to the agreement of Full Council, an allowance will also be paid for undertaking the roles.

Independent Members of the Audit and Risk Committee receive an allowance that is currently £136 per committee meeting. The Independent Person for standards receives an allowance of £1,000 per annum. All payments are subject to tax and national insurance deductions.

You will be required to sign an undertaking to abide by a Code of Conduct for Members, which sets out standards of behaviour expected from all members. Additionally, you will be required to complete a Register of Interests form, which sets out any personal interests that affects the wellbeing or financial position of you or people that you have a close association with. This is to ensure fellow members, officers of the council and the public know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. You will also be required to pro-actively declare any potential conflicts that may arise in your role. For example, if a conflict interest arises out of business on the committee's agenda or from a change in your personal circumstances, you must declare that interest before the committee meeting.

These posts are also subject to the Disclosure And Barring Service – If an offer of employment is made, you will be required to attend a DBS meeting and apply for disclosure. Confirmation of appointment will be subject to satisfactory clearances from the DBS bureau.

### Recruitment Process

Initial shortlisting will take place shortly after the closing date and applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application thereafter.

It may be necessary for candidates to be interviewed by the Employment and Appointments Committee, which consists of five councillors. A small number of council officers will also be in attendance. The final appointment is subject to approval of the Full Council.

## Equal Opportunities

It is the policy of Islington Council that no user of service, present or future employee or job applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of their sex, perceived or actual sexual orientation, marital status, race, religion or belief, age, creed, colour, nationality, national origin, ethnic origin, or disability, or on the grounds of their association with someone in one of these groups; nor is disadvantaged by any conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified. We welcome applications from Black and Minority Ethnic candidates and acknowledge our responsibility to mitigate against racial discrimination.

Applicants are appointed on the basis of their experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to do the job. The Council has a duty to ensure the integrity of the selection process and that the correct procedures have been followed.

## Data Protection

The council takes its obligations under the Data Protection Act very seriously. Any data about you will be held in secure conditions will access restricted to those who need it in connection with dealing with your application and selection process. Applications are retained for a period of 12 months and applications from candidates not selected for the post will be destroyed after this period.

## Further information

For more information about the council and its services, visit [www.islington.gov.uk](http://www.islington.gov.uk)

Islington Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and expects all staff, and volunteers to share this commitment.

## Queries

Should you have any queries about any aspect of the role, you can contact Jonathan Moore, Deputy Head of Democratic Services and Governance, 020 7527 3308 or email [democracy@islington.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@islington.gov.uk)

## How to apply

1. Examine the job description and person specification carefully to assess your suitability for the role.
2. Complete the application form, ensuring you demonstrate how you meet the criteria in the person specification.
3. Submit your application form by the deadline of 9.00am on Friday 15 November 2024

**Completed application forms should be sent to: [democracy@islington.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@islington.gov.uk)**