

## **Audit and Governance Committee - Independent Member**

The London Borough of Croydon is delivering a wide-ranging programme of corporate governance and financial controls improvement. As part of that commitment, in 2022 Croydon Council established an Audit & Governance Committee. Chaired by an Independent Member, the Committee provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards within the Council. The Committee's main purposes being to:

- Provide independent assurance to the Council of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment;
- Oversee internal and external audit, helping to ensure that efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place;
- Provide independent review of the Council's governance, risk management and control frameworks
- Oversee the financial reporting and annual governance processes, and;
- Provide independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment.

There's currently a vacancy for an Independent Member to join the Committee and become part of Croydon's improvement and strengthening of good governance. Ideally the independent member would bring to the committee a wide range of skills and experience – possessing knowledge of financial controls and management, risk, and possibly have an audit background.

You cannot be considered for appointment if you:-

- Are currently a Member, Co-opted Member, or an employee or a consultant to the authority in any capacity;
- Have been either an employee or Elected Member of the Council in the last five years;
- Are related to, or are a close friend of, any Councillor or senior officer of the Council.
- In addition to be eligible for appointment, a person must not be disqualified from holding office as a Member of the Council.
- Accordingly, any person who is recommended for appointment will be required to confirm that he/she is not disqualified.

The successful applicant will be appointed for a four-year period and ideally live or work in the borough. As co-option is a way of ensuring that all voices are represented

on Council committees, we particularly encourage applicants from historically underrepresented backgrounds and communities to apply.

The estimated time commitment will vary but generally will involve attendance at seven evening meetings (6:30 pm start) per year held at Croydon Town Hall. You will also need time commitment to read the agenda papers in advance of the meetings.

Please note, there's no annual allowance associated with the position. If you are interested in serving and gaining experience of local government governance and committees, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please send your CV and supporting statement outlining how your skills and experience relate to the role to: [democratic.services@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@croydon.gov.uk)

Deadline for applications is Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023.

### **What is audit and governance?**

The London Borough of Croydon is committed to delivering and promoting good financial control and governance. As part of that commitment, the Council has established an Audit and Governance Committee to provide independent oversight of the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of financial reporting and annual governance processes.

### **What is an independent member?**

An independent member is a member of the general public, aged 18 or over, who works alongside the six councillors and an independent chair, on the Audit and Governance Committee. They contribute to the work of the Committee by bringing specialist knowledge and skills to the process and providing an element of external challenge and support.

Ideally, the independent member should offer a range of different skills and experience. The ideal candidate will have knowledge of local government finance, experience of financial control and management, possibly with an audit background. They must also demonstrate an ability to establish good working relationships with councillors and officers. An independent member is objective and politically independent with an ability to analyse information.

An independent member is expected to attend formal meetings of the Audit and Governance Committee and to prepare for each meeting by reading the agenda papers and supporting information in order to be familiar with the issues for discussion.

### **What skills and qualities does an independent member need?**

We are looking for people who have:

- A high level of integrity and inspire public confidence.
- Ability to be objective, independent and impartial.
- Knowledge and understanding of public sector finances, risk management, corporate governance and the roles of internal and external audit.

- Good analytical skills and the ability to scrutinise financial information and processes and to challenge appropriately.
- Good communication skills and ability to contribute to discussions.
- The ability to work effectively within a team and build good relations with others in a committee setting.
- A respect for confidentiality.
- The ability to deal with issues of a sensitive nature in a diplomatic manner.
- Knowledge/experience of local government or some other aspects of the public sector and/or of large, complex organisations at a senior level.
- An awareness of the issues currently facing local government and the key priorities for the borough.

### **Role description - What will you be expected to do?**

- To actively promote good governance, risk management and control in the delivery of the Council's functions.
- Attend and participate in formal committee meetings, providing external challenge, scrutiny and support in relation to reports presented to the committee.
- Prepare for each meeting by reading the agenda papers and additional information to familiarise yourself with the issues under discussion and consider the questions you may wish to put to officers.
- At the meetings listen carefully and ask questions in a way which is non-judgemental and respects confidentiality.
- Keep up to date with key issues for the Council and the Borough; to develop your understanding of the key priorities and initiatives being pursued.
- Contribute to achieving open, accountable and transparent local democracy in Croydon.
- To abide by the Council's Constitution and Members' Code of Conduct.

### **What level of commitment is required?**

The successful applicant will be appointed for a four year period. The estimated time commitment will vary but generally will involve attendance at seven evening (6:30 pm start) meetings per year. These last approximately three hours and are held in Croydon Town Hall. You will also need to read the agenda papers in advance of the meetings.

### **Disqualifications**

You cannot be considered for appointment if you:-

- Are currently a Member, Co-opted Member, or an employee or a consultant to the authority in any capacity;
- Have been either an employee or Elected Member of the Council in the last five years;

- Are related to, or are a close friend of, any Councillor or senior officer of the Council.
- In addition to be eligible for appointment, a person must not be disqualified from holding office as a Member of the Council. Accordingly, any person who is recommended for appointment will be required to confirm that he/she is not disqualified.