



Independent Chair Opportunity

Audit, Finance & Performance Committee

A key independent role at the heart of governance and accountability



HILLINGDON
LONDON

www.hillingdon.gov.uk

Welcome from the council's Chief Executive

Thank you for your interest in becoming the Independent Chair of Hillingdon's Audit, Finance & Performance Committee. This is a key appointment at an important time for the council, sitting at the centre of our strong democratic framework and our commitment to sound decision-making, effective scrutiny and public accountability. Hillingdon is a high-performing authority with a strong track record of delivering quality services for residents. We continue to perform well across a wide range of areas, combining effective service delivery with a clear focus on value for money and maintaining comparatively low costs for local people.



Like many councils, however, we are operating in a challenging financial environment. Increasing demand, rising costs and wider funding pressures have required careful stewardship and difficult decisions, including the need for Exceptional Financial Support. Despite these challenges, we remain focused on stability, resilience and strengthening our long-term financial position.

Against this backdrop, we have established the new Audit, Finance & Performance Committee as a strengthened and more strategic forum for governance, assurance and oversight. By bringing together independent audit with a clearly defined scrutiny role, the Committee provides a more joined-up and transparent approach to understanding risk, performance and financial sustainability.

As Independent Chair, you will play a vital role in ensuring the Committee provides strong challenge, robust assurance and clear public accountability. Your leadership will help maintain confidence in our governance and financial management, while supporting the council's continued resilience and long-term sustainability.

We look forward to hearing from candidates who can bring independence, insight and sound professional judgement to this important role.

Tony Zaman
Chief Executive

About Hillingdon's democratic governance

Hillingdon Council operates within a strong and well-established democratic framework, with a clear focus on transparency, accountability and good decision-making.

Councillors are actively engaged in shaping policy, holding decision-makers to account and representing their communities. There is a real commitment across the council to making the democratic process work well, and it is widely valued and supported.

Our governance is designed to be clear, responsive and lean - able to respond at pace where needed, while still providing effective challenge, assurance and public visibility. This balance is a key strength, helping the council remain both accountable and efficient.

Key aspects of the framework are structured as follows:

- Full Council sets the overall strategic and budgetary framework
- Cabinet acts within this, and makes executive decisions on policy and service delivery
- Select Committees provide independent and constructive overview and scrutiny
- the Audit, Finance & Performance Committee plays a central role in audit, assurance and corporate financial and performance oversight.

Following the 2026 local elections, the council's governance and officer arrangements are set out in more detail in the structure charts included at the end of this pack.



Purpose of the role

The Independent Chair leads a committee established to carry out two distinct but complementary functions:

1. The council's independent audit and assurance function
2. A strategic overview and scrutiny role in relation to finance, performance, value for money, procurement and commercialisation

This is a broader and more influential role than a conventional Audit Committee chair. The Committee has been designed to strengthen councillor oversight of financial governance and performance, and to provide a single, high-profile and transparent forum for both assurance and scrutiny.

The Committee comprises elected councillors from across the council's political groups. The Independent Chair, whilst non-voting, will need to work constructively and impartially across parties, fostering balanced, respectful and effective discussion and decisions.

The Committee's remit

Audit and assurance

The Committee provides independent assurance on the council's governance, risk management and internal control environment. Its role includes:

- oversight of internal and external audit, ensuring their independence, effectiveness and appropriate follow-up of recommendations
- monitoring the council's risk management framework, corporate governance and control environment
- reviewing key policies on anti-fraud, anti-corruption and whistleblowing
- overseeing the Annual Governance Statement and wider governance arrangements
- reviewing and approving the annual Statement of Accounts, alongside external audit findings
- maintaining a clear view of how financial and non-financial performance impacts organisational risk
- reporting annually to council on the Committee's effectiveness and assurance work.

Overview and scrutiny

In its distinct scrutiny role, the Committee:

- acts as the lead committee for finance oversight across the council
- receives and considers finance, performance and risk reports on behalf of select committees
- reviews and comments on the Cabinet's annual budget proposals prior to Full Council
- supports the wider scrutiny function by identifying issues for further detailed review
- undertakes scrutiny across finance, governance, procurement, transformation and commercialisation
- contributes to holding the Cabinet to account by reviewing decisions and actions, and making recommendations to improve policy and services.

Distinct audit and scrutiny sessions

A defining feature of the Committee is that it performs two different functions, with a clear and disciplined separation between them.

Meetings and the Committee's work programme are structured to reflect this, with distinct audit/assurance and scrutiny sessions. As Chair, you will ensure the Committee operates clearly in the appropriate capacity at the right time.

This approach supports effective oversight, enables councillors and officers to apply the appropriate mindset, and provides clarity and transparency for the public.

All committee meetings are public and broadcast live on the council's YouTube channel.

Person specification

Essential

We are seeking an individual with:

- significant senior-level experience in audit, finance, governance or risk
- a strong understanding of audit and assurance frameworks, governance and financial reporting
- the ability to provide independent, objective and strategic challenge
- experience of chairing or working effectively within formal board or committee environments
- excellent communication, judgement and relationship-management skills
- the credibility to engage with councillors, senior officers, internal audit and external audit.

Desirable

It would be advantageous to have:

- experience within local government or the wider public sector
- familiarity with statement of accounts approval, governance statements and audit reporting
- an understanding of scrutiny, accountability and public decision-making environments.

Independence requirements

To preserve independence, applicants must not be a current or recent (within five years) councillor or officer of Hillingdon Council, and should have no associations that could compromise impartiality, such as closely associated with any political party or current councillor at Hillingdon Council.

Time commitment and remuneration

- The Committee meets approximately 10 to 11 times per year.
- The role includes attendance at briefings, preparatory sessions and training.
- The annual remuneration is £24,318.39.

Support to the Chair

The Chair and Committee are supported by Democratic Services, providing professional advice, coordination of meetings, and ongoing governance support.

How to apply

Please submit:

- a current CV; and
- an expression of interest (maximum 500 words) outlining your suitability

to democratic@hillington.gov.uk

Closing date: 31 July 2026

Informal chat?

Please contact Lloyd White, Head of Democratic Services, by calling 01895 250636.

Selection process

The selection process will include:

- shortlisting against the role requirements, CV and expression of interest
- for those shortlisted, an informal meet and greet with senior officers to discuss the role and your experience
- formal interviews with councillors on the Audit, Finance & Performance Committee, held in a closed session.

The Committee will make a recommendation on the preferred candidate.

The final appointment will be subject to approval by Full Council.

In closing

This appointment offers a valuable opportunity to contribute to strong governance, financial stewardship, accountability and public confidence at Hillington Council.

Links

- [How the council works and governance](#)
- [Governance structure chart 2026/27](#)
- [Audit and scrutiny arrangements 2026/27](#)