

OFFICER DELEGATED DECISION FORM

Subject of decision:
Appointment of members to the Independent Improvement Advisory Board and provision of remuneration for two of the four members
Text of decision:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The council's draft Annual Governance Statement 2020/21, the External Auditor's Value for Money judgement 2020/21, published in July 2022, identified that the culture and governance arrangements of the Council have not been operating as expected and that this as undermined the effectiveness of the Council's governance framework. Since that time, although the Council has made progress, it has not done so at pace and there continues to be concern that the Council's culture and governance challenges have not been addressed. This is reflected in the issuing of a Best Value notice by Government in January 2023 and then in its External Auditor making 11 formal recommendations, exercising its powers under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. 2. This report documents the Chief Executive's decision to appoint an Independent Improvement Advisory Board (IIAB), to provide oversight, support and challenge to the Council's improvement and transformation journey, with particular focus on ensuring compliance with the Council's Best Value Duty under the Local Government Act 1999, notably: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural and governance issues, including those identified through previous CIPFA and previous, and any future, external auditor reports. ▪ Financial sustainability, including a balanced medium-term financial strategy aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan. 3. The Board will also oversee progress by the Council towards implementing the actions arising from the Section 24 Statutory Recommendations of the External Auditor, dated 21 August 2023 also presented to Council on the 18 September 2023. 4. To ensure alignment between the work of the Corporate Governance and Children's Improvement Advisory Boards, Stuart Smith; Chair of the Children's Improvement Advisory Board, will have a standing invitation to the Corporate Governance IIAB on matters of mutual significance. 5. The estimated cost of engaging the external Chair and three peers to the Board in terms of day rates and estimated expenses over the two financial years is £72,752. The LGA contribution will be £38,352 (53%).

Summary of Costs and Funding	2023/24	2024/25	Total
	£	£	£
Day Rate Costs	43,272	21,480	64,752
Expenses	4,660	3,340	8,000
Contingency	6,000	4,400	10,400
Total Expenditure	53,932	29,220	83,152
Funded By			
Corporate Contingency	30,730	14,070	44,800
LGA Contribution	23,202	15,150	38,352
Total Funding	53,932	29,220	83,152

6. In addition, the Council will hold a contingency budget of £10,400 to allow funding if the Board members identify that there is a reasonable case for them working more days in order to provide the council with effective support and oversight of its improvement journey.
7. The Council's contribution will be met from the Central Contingency Budget in 2023/24 and 2024/5.

8. The procurement of Wallace Sampson and Ros Jones will be completed by the Local Government Association who will make the necessary payments directly. Suki Binjal and Chris Buss will be remunerated by the Council, following approval of an exemption that has been agreed following the procurement governance process.

9. Board members to be appointed are:

Name	Experience / speciality
Wallace Sampson OBE	Local authority CEO (Chair)
Ros Jones CBE	Unitary local authority Mayor / Leader
Suki Binjal	Unitary local authority Monitoring Officer
Chris Buss	London Borough and Unitary local authority Chief Finance Officer
Mark Edgell	LGA Regional Lead (LGA employee – excluded from cost figures above).

Declarations of Interest by any member or relevant local government body:

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Date of decision:

19/9/2023

Reason for decision:

The decision will help ensure the Council is able to comply with a recommendation from its External Auditor, EY
Service area:
Chief Executive
Name of officer making decision:
Clive Heaphy, Chief Executive
Other options considered (if any):
The other option would have been to go to the market to tender for this service, given the impact any delays would have on being able to comply with EY's recommendations within their timescales, an exemption was sought and approved to allow the direct appointment of the Board members, following advice from the Local Government Association on suitable candidates.
Has an Impact Assessment been completed Yes/No – if yes please attach to the decision.
No.
List of background papers (do not list if contain exempt/confidential information)
Council report – Corporate Governance Improvement Plan and Delivery Arrangements (Phase 3) – 18 September 2023