

CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

Independent Chair,
General Purposes and
Audit Committee

About us

Croydon is one of London's largest and most diverse boroughs, with distinct communities, thriving district hubs and a vibrant town centre. We are proud of our heritage, creativity and diversity, which will be at the heart of Croydon London's Borough of Culture 2023 celebrations. We are home to more than 380 000 residents, with the largest number of under 18s of any London borough. We are an outer London borough but have the same issues and needs as our inner London neighbours. Whilst we have faced many challenges over the last 12 months, we are clear about the scale of what lies ahead.

With clarity comes confidence and determination. We are at a point of looking forward with renewed vigour to create a modern local authority, capable of dealing with tomorrow's challenges today.

Our future

We are genuinely excited about our future. Under the leadership of our new Chief Executive, we will continue to tackle inequality and poverty within the borough. We will provide the best quality services that we can and ensure our most vulnerable residents are safe. Through strong, trusting partnerships, we will find new ways of working to secure the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of all of Croydon's residents and businesses.



Key information

Reports and reviews

- The Improvement and Assurance Panel, Section 114 Notice, report in the public interest, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) rapid non statutory review and internal audit reports are outlined below, and can be found by following this link: <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/council-and-elections/budgets-and-spending/reports-and-reviews>.
- Internal audit reports: Internal audit reports for our council departments.
- Section 114 notice: Croydon Council issued two Section 114 notices which are now lifted but the Council continues to work with the principles of control.
- Report in the Public Interest: Croydon Council's external auditors have published on 23 October 2020 a Report in the Public Interest.
- MHCLG rapid non statutory review from October 2020: We have accepted the findings of a rapid review carried out on behalf of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- Croydon's Improvement and Assurance Panel: A government appointed panel providing external advice, challenge, and expertise, along with assurance to the Secretary of State as we continue to deliver our renewal plans.

Croydon Renewal Plan

Our Renewal Plan is a large change programme for the Council that sets out how we will respond to our financial challenge making sure priority services are delivered effectively, sustainably and within our financial means. The Renewal Plan consists of a number of programmes of work and external reviews including a medium term financial recovery plan that will deliver the required changes. The work to deliver the changes is overseen by an Improvement and Assurance Panel that has been appointed by government.

Our Values



Croydon Council's priorities

We will live within our means, balance the books and provide value for money for our residents.

We will focus on tackling ingrained inequality and poverty in the borough. We will follow the evidence to tackle the underlying causes of inequality and hardship, like structural racism, environmental injustice and economic injustice.

We will focus on providing the best quality core service we can afford. First and foremost, providing social care services that keep our most vulnerable residents safe and healthy and keep our streets clean and safe.

To ensure we get full benefit from every pound we spend, other services will only be provided where they can be shown to have a direct benefit in keeping people safe and reducing demand.

Croydon Council's new ways of working

We will practise sound financial management, being honest about what we've spent and what we can afford.

We will focus on what we, uniquely, can do as the local authority as the democratically elected leaders of our borough. This means we will focus on our core services, and a small number of evidence-based outcomes that deliver our priorities. But we will also continue to use our democratic mandate to convene our partners around a common purpose and to make a clear case for a better deal for Croydon.

We will aim to become a much more transparent, open and honest council.

We will involve residents in our decision making. But we will also need to be clear with residents about what we can do, and what we can't. When we have to say no, we will do so with compassion and take the time to explain our decisions.



Key Responsibilities

- Chairing the General Purposes and Audit Committee, which is tasked with reviewing:
 - Financial statements;
 - Internal Audit Reports;
 - External Audit Reports;
 - Other evidence of the Council's risk management and internal control systems.
- Working with the Chief Finance Officer (S151) and the Chief Internal Auditor to plan an effective work programme for the Committee;
- Report to Council when necessary to give assurances about the Council's financial statements, risk management and internal control mechanisms or to raise concerns of any significant weakness;
- Receive briefings from Directors or other senior staff in order to understand the context and import of forthcoming issues.
- The role and purpose of the General Purposes and Audit Committee is to provide:
 - Independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment;
 - Independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment;
 - Assurances that issues arising from the preparation on the authority's financial accounts are properly dealt with, e.g. check of compliance with the authority's accounting policies, issues arising from the annual audit, assurance surrounding the compilation of the Statement of Internal Control.

Data Protection

- Being aware of the council's legal obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 (the "2018 Act") and the EU General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") for the security, accuracy and relevance of personal data held, ensuring that all administrative and financial processes also comply.
- Maintaining customer records and archive systems in accordance with departmental procedures and policies as well as statutory requirements.
- Treating all information acquired through employment, both formally and informally, in accordance with the Workforce Data Protection Policy.
- There are strict rules and protocols defining access to and use of the council's databases. Any breach of these rules and protocols will be subject to disciplinary investigation. There are internal procedures in place for employees to raise matters of concern regarding such issues as bad practice or mismanagement.

Health and Safety

- Being responsible for own Health & Safety, as well as that of colleagues, service users and the public.

Person Specification

- Appropriate financial training and experience – ideally as a qualified accountant;
- Detailed knowledge and experience of internal control and audit standards in a large, multi-disciplinary organisation; ideally local government/health;
- Experience of operating within a formal risk management framework;
- Experience of Chairing high level meetings to achieve effective outcomes; ideally experience of having chaired Audit committees;
- Evidence of having worked for at least 10 years at a senior level;
- Able to demonstrate the ability to develop and manage a good working relationship with politicians and senior managers;
- Ability to manage and present information to groups in politically sensitive environments and to work effectively with colleagues who may have different levels of experience and understanding;
- Able to demonstrate influencing and consensus building skills;
- Assertive in pursuing the correct course of action;
- Enthusiastic, not easily deterred & able to convey enthusiasm to others;
- Committed to excellent public services;
- Understanding and commitment to promoting equality of opportunity in service delivery with an understanding of the issues underpinning these values;
- Evidence of continued professional development;
- Knowledge of local government finance.



Terms of appointment

Time commitment

You will be expected to attend up to 12 evening meetings a year.

Remuneration

£8,000 per year.

Length of appointment

All appointments are for an initial 4-year term.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Promote and celebrate Croydon's diversity and ensure equality and diversity are central considerations to the Council's work both in terms of policy development, service delivery culture of the organisation and employment practice. Lead by example and provide leadership on equality and diversity issues to advance equality tackle discrimination internally and externally.

We welcome applications from candidates from minoritised groups.

How to apply

We hope you will consider expressing an interest in this role. If you have questions about the appointment process and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact Catherine Kift on 07591 952632.

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/croydon-chair-gpac/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared;

- your CV or equivalent biographical information
- a covering letter that sets out your motivation for applying for this appointment, and why you think your skills and experience make you suitable
- details of two people you have worked with at Board level previously who we could talk to at shortlist stage (with your permission).

We would also be grateful if you would also complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application; you can email the form back to us when you apply and our team will collect it.

Closing date is Monday 5th July 2021.

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Starfish