



## OFFICER REPORT TO COUNCIL

### APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER

#### **KEY ISSUE/DECISION:**

The purpose of this report is to request that County Council approves the appointment of an Interim Monitoring Officer.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

1. Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to designate one of its officers as the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer may not also be the Council's Chief Finance Officer or the Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service.
2. The functions of the Monitoring Officer include:-
  - oversight and reporting of the operation of the Council's Constitutional arrangements and the decision making processes;
  - reporting on unlawfulness and maladministration;
  - investigating allegations of breach of the Code of Conduct; and
  - seeking rulings from the Council's Independent Person and arranging meetings of the Member Conduct Panel.
3. Paul Evans, the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, will be leaving the Council on 22 April 2024. The People, Performance and Development Committee (PPDC) is currently undertaking recruitment to the permanent role and hopes to be able to recommend an appointment to commence in around four months' time (given notice periods).
4. Pending the permanent appointment of a new Director of Law and Governance, a short-term arrangement needs to be put in place to cover the Director and Monitoring Officer role and ensure that the council complies with its statutory obligations. Officers have interviewed several candidates and PPDC members have agreed that the recommended candidate meets with the Chair of PPDC prior to recommendation to Council. That meeting has taken place and Asmat Hussain is recommended to Council for appointment to the interim role.

5. Asmat has excellent experience at corporate leadership team level as a Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer leading large Legal and Democratic Services teams for unitary, district and London borough councils. Asmat will commence her role on 15 April and, if agreed by Council, will take on the Monitoring Officer responsibilities from 22 April.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATION:</u></b>
-------------------------------

That the County Council appoints Asmat Hussain to act as Interim Monitoring Officer for Surrey County Council with effect from 22 April 2024.

---

**Lead/Contact Officers:**

Anna D'Alessandro, Director of Finance - Corporate and Commercial and Interim Section 151 Officer: [Anna.DAlessandro@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:Anna.DAlessandro@surreycc.gov.uk)

**Sources/background papers:**

None

---