



OFFICER REPORT TO COUNCIL

APPOINTMENT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

KEY ISSUE/DECISION:

To appoint the Council's Monitoring Officer.

BACKGROUND:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 mandates local authorities to appoint a Monitoring Officer (MO). This officer ensures the legality and propriety of council actions, providing legal guidance and ensuring compliance with statutory obligations. They must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced.

2 The appointment process

- 2.1 Asmat Hussain was appointed as Interim Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer by Council and has been undertaking the role since April 2024 whilst the recruitment of a permanent Director of Law and Governance (MO) was undertaken.
- 2.2 The Council's Constitution, Part 2, Officer Employment Procedure Rules, states that the Council will approve the appointment of the Monitoring Officer following the recommendation of such an appointment by the People, Performance and Development Committee.
- 2.3 At the conclusion of a competitive and rigorous selection process, the People, Performance and Development Committee recommends that Asmat Hussain be appointed as the Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer of Surrey County Council, on a fixed term contract until 31 March 2027, with a start date to be agreed.
- 2.4 Asmat's previous experience includes undertaking interim Director of Legal and Governance roles focussing on improvement and recovery work for various councils from 2017 to 2024, including positions at Thurrock Borough Council, Onesource (Newham and Havering Councils), London Borough of Newham, Bedford Borough Council, London Borough of Croydon, and London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

2.5 Asmat is a member of the Law Society and has been a practicing solicitor since 1999. Asmat also achieved a Law Society Diploma in Local Government Law and Practice in 2004.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Asmat Hussain is appointed as the Monitoring Officer of Surrey County Council, with a start date to be agreed.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report complies with the Council's duty under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to designate one of their officers as the Monitoring Officer.

Lead/Contact Officers:

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Sources/background papers:

None
