

# Council

30 June 2026



**Reading**  
Borough Council  
Working better with you

<b>Title</b>	Recruitment of Independent Person and Independent Chair of the Standards Committee
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report status</b>	Public report
<b>Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report</b>	Jayne La Grua, Interim Director of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
<b>Report author</b>	Simon Hill, Acting Democratic Services Manager
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Councillor Terry, Leader of the Council
<b>Council priority</b>	Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
<b>Recommendations</b>	That Council: (1) Appoints Amanda Lewis as Independent Chair of the Standards Committee for a fixed term of 4 years; and (2) Appoints Amina Hossain as an Independent Person pursuant to section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 for a fixed term of 4 years.

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report asks Council to agree the appointment of an Independent Chair of the Standards Committee and an Independent Person appointed pursuant to section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 following the conclusion of a successful open recruitment process.

## 2 Recruitment of Independent Chair

- 2.1 The terms of reference of the Standards Committee include provision for at least one and no more than three co-opted Independent Member(s), that is, persons who are not a councillor or an officer of the Council or otherwise disqualified from being a member of a committee of the Council under Section 104 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Committee's terms of reference further provide that the Council will appoint an Independent Member of the Standards Committee to be its Chair.
- 2.2 Following the retirement of the previous Independent Chair, the Committee does not have any Independent Members or Chair.
- 2.3 The post was advertised between 24 April and 17 May 2026 and five applications were received. Candidates were shortlisted against the following criteria:
- (1) Eligibility and independence
  - (2) Understanding of public life and ethical standards
  - (3) Integrity and values
  - (4) Analytical thinking
  - (5) Communication skills
  - (6) Relevant experience
  - (7) Commitment and availability

- 2.4 Two applicants were shortlisted and interviewed by the Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Manager, with the successful applicant being proposed to Standards Committee for recommendation to full Council for formal appointment.
- 2.5 **Amanda Lewis** is recommended for appointment to the post of Independent Chair of the Standards Committee for a fixed term of 4 years.
- 2.6 Amanda is an experienced Standards Committee Chair, which is a role that she currently discharges for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

### **3. Recruitment of Independent Person**

- 3.1 The Council is required, by Section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011, to appoint at least one Independent Person whose views are to be sought, and taken into account, by the Council before it makes its decision on an allegation under the Councillors' Code of Conduct that it has decided to investigate. The views of the Independent Person may also be sought by a member, or co-opted member, of the Council if that person's behaviour is the subject of an allegation.
- 3.2 For the purposes of the legislation, a person is not independent if they are, or have been in the preceding five years, a member, co-opted member or officer of the Council, or a relative or close friend of a member, co-opted member or officer.
- 3.3 Following the retirement of the Council's previous Independent Person, the post is currently vacant. An Independent Person may not be appointed unless the vacancy has been advertised, the person has submitted an application to fill the vacancy, and the person's appointment has been approved by a majority of the members of the authority.
- 3.4 The post was advertised between 24 April and 17 May 2026 and ten applications were received. Candidates were shortlisted against the criteria set out at paragraph 2.3 above.
- 3.5 Three applicants were shortlisted and interviewed by the Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Manager, with the successful applicant being proposed to Standards Committee for recommendation to full Council for formal appointment.
- 3.6 **Amina Hossain** is recommended for appointment to the post of Independent Person for a fixed term of 4 years.
- 3.7 Amina is an experienced Independent Person, a role that she currently discharges for City of London Corporation and previously discharged for London Borough of Sutton.

### **4. Contribution to Strategic Aims**

- 4.1 The Council's strategic aims are underpinned by the ability of members, officers and local residents to participate in democratic processes in the confidence that high standards of conduct are maintained.

### **5. Environmental and Climate Implications**

- 5.1 There are no environmental or climate implications arising from this report.

### **6. Community Engagement**

- 6.1 There are no Community Engagement implications arising from this report.

### **7. Equality Implications**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant to the contents of this report.

### **8. Other Relevant Considerations**

- 8.1 There are none.

### **9. Legal Implications**

- 9.1 Covered in the body of the report.

**10. Financial Implications**

- 10.1 The Independent Chair of the Standards Committee receives a Tier 3 Special Responsibility Allowance and the Independent Person receives a Tier 4 Special Responsibility Allowance under the Members' Allowances Scheme 2026/27, as approved by Council on 27 January 2026, which is fully funded from within the Member Services budgets.

**11. Timetable for Implementation**

- 11.1 Not applicable.

**12. Background Papers**

- 12.1 There are none.