

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 12th June 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director for Children's Services

**PORTFOLIO:** Children, Young People & Families

**SUBJECT:** New Co-Opted Member of the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board

**WARD(S)** Borough Wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to confirm the intention to Co-Opt a new independent member of the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board to provide assurance and challenge utilising subject matter expertise.

**2.0 RECOMMENDED: The Executive Board recommends to the Council the following appointment:**

**Stuart Smith OBE be Co-Opted to the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board for a period of 12 months, to be reviewed at the end of that period.**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Following a review of the Council's Children's Services arrangements by a Commissioner from the Department for Education in late 2024 / early 2025, the Council received a recommendation that an Independent Member be co-opted onto the Children, Young People and Families Policy & Performance Board.
- 3.2 This report sets out the Council's response to that recommendation, proposing that Stuart Smith OBE, an experienced ex Director of Children's Services and current DfE Advisor is co-opted to the Children, Young People and Families Policy & Performance Board as soon as is practical, as a non-statutory co-optee.
- 3.3 The Council's Constitution sets out that Co-optees shall be nominated by the relevant Policy and Performance Board and their appointment subject to approval by the Executive Board and Full Council. This report seeks that approval.
- 3.4 It is noted that on the appointment of a Co-optee, the length of service of each Co-optee shall be specified and may only be

extended with Council approval. The period of Co-option is proposed to be 12months.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no implications to current Council policies.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

As per the Councils Allowance scheme allows for:

*“Any co-optees, as permitted by the Council’s constitution, shall be entitled to claim Travel and Subsistence and Child Care and Dependent Carer’s Allowances on the same basis as any Member of the Council”*

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES**

##### **6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

There are no impacts on this Council policy.

##### **6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

There are no impacts on this Council policy.

##### **6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

Whilst there is no direct impact on the policy this does support the improvement journey and strengthen oversight to delivery and quality of service delivery.

##### **6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

There are no impacts on this Council policy.

##### **6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

There are no impacts on this Council policy.

##### **6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

There are no impacts on this Council policy.

#### **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

##### **7.1** There are several risks that follow this decision, however, due to the nature of the risk they are being mitigated purely through the fact that this report is ensuring due process is being followed in the co-

opting of the independent person to the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board

- a) Not co-opting to the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board does not follow the advice of the Commissioner Report and risks further scrutiny and or intervention.
- b) By not following due process and constitutional rules the service faces political and or legal challenge in co-opting to the Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

8.2 Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

8.3 This role reinforces the oversight and scrutiny of the directorate in delivering against these duties.

## **9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

There is no direct impact on climate change.

## **10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

'None under the meaning of the Act.'