

Report for: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting:	27 May 2021
Subject:	Appointment of Portfolio Holder Assistants
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Hugh Peart, Director of Legal and Governance Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Graham Henson, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Regeneration, Partnerships and Devolution
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	All
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Job Description of Portfolio Holder Assistant

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the proposals by the Leader of the Council for named Portfolio Holder Assistants, the Wards they represent and their area of responsibility under the identified Cabinet Member.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to approve:

- (i) the appointment of the identified Portfolio Holder Assistants and responsibilities and note that these supersede previous appointments;
- (ii) the payment of Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) to the Portfolio Holder Assistants with the implementation date of 27 May 2021.

Reason: (for recommendations)

To enable the support to Cabinet Members in terms of information provision and management, to contribute to and ensure an effective decision-making framework as part of the democratic process.

Section 2 – Report**Introductory paragraph**

2.1 The Local Government Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires the elected Leader of the Council to notify the information set out below:

- name of Deputy Leader of the Council;
- names of Cabinet Members and their delegated authorities (ie Portfolios).

2.2 The Cabinet may also appoint Portfolio Holder Assistants without any decision-making powers, to assist Cabinet Members in undertaking the full extent or part of their roles effectively. Details of appointments are set out below for approval. A relevant generic job description is attached at Appendix 1 to fully outline the extent of their duties. It is recommended that the level of SRA payment of £2,142 pa will be effective from the date of the Cabinet meeting.

Portfolio Holder Assistants

The following Councillors are notified appointed as Portfolio Holder Assistants, without any formal decision-making powers.

Portfolio Holder Assistant	Identified Remit	Responsible Cabinet Member/Portfolio
Councillor Angella Murphy-Strachan (Edgware Ward)	Corporate Parenting	Councillor Mrs Christine Robson Education and Social Services for Children and Young People
Councillor Ajay Maru (Kenton West Ward)	Business	Councillor Keith Ferry Business, Property and Leisure
Councillor Maxine Henson (Roxbourne Ward)	Adult Social Care Delivery	Councillor Simon Brown Adults and Social Care
Councillor Dan Anderson (Harrow)	Customer Services	Councillor Sue Anderson Community Engagement,

on the Hill Ward)		Accessibility & Customer Services
Councillor David Perry (Marlborough Ward)	Regeneration, Transport and Road Safety	Councillor Varsha Parmar Environment and Climate Change
Councillor Chloe Smith (Rayners Lane Ward)	Communications	Councillor Graham Henson Leader of the Council Strategy, Regeneration, Partnerships and Devolution
Councillor Sarah Butterworth (Harrow on the Hill Ward)	Climate Emergency	Councillor Varsha Parmar Environment and Climate Change
Councillor James Lee (Edgware Ward)	Community Cohesion East	Councillor Peymana Assad Community Cohesion, Crime & Enforcement

Options considered

None

Performance Issues

It is anticipated that the appointment of these roles will enhance an effective decision-making process in terms of democratic delivery and thereby deliver an improved experience for residents.

Environmental Impact

No specific environmental impacts beyond a contribution to smoother decision-making process being put in place.

Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
Portfolio Holder Assistants unable to fulfill role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience of members proposed ▪ Officer support ▪ Training 	Green
Conflicts of Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where conflict of interest occurs, a member would be required to declare the interest. 	Amber

Procurement Implications

None.

Legal Implications

The Council's Constitution provides for the appointment of Portfolio Holder Assistants. The role has no decision-making powers in relation to the Portfolio, whether or not the relevant Portfolio Holder is absent. Portfolio Holder Assistants shall not participate in or vote on the scrutiny of matters within their identified remit as approved by Cabinet.

Financial Implications

The Portfolio Holder Assistant role attracts an SRA (Special Responsibility Allowance) of £2,142 per annum. Only one SRA payment may be made to a Member, in addition to the Basic Allowance. The cost of the SRAs will be contained within the budget for Members' allowances

- Wider resource implications (staff, accommodation, IT etc).
- The proposed procurement route where relevant.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

There are no direct equalities implications.

Council Priorities

1. Improving the environment and addressing climate change
2. Tackling poverty and inequality
3. Building homes and infrastructure
4. Addressing health and social care inequality
5. Thriving economy

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Statutory Officer: Sharon Daniels

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Date: 19/05/21

Statutory Officer: Hugh Peart

Signed by the Monitoring Officer

Date: 19/05/21

Statutory Officer: Susan Dixon

Signed by the Head of Internal Audit

Date: 19/05/21

Mandatory Checks

Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards

EqlA carried out: NO

EqlA cleared by: N/A

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Elaine McEachron, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager, Email: elaine.mceachron@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: [Council's Constitution](#)

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

NO

APPENDIX 1

Job Description - Portfolio Holder Assistant

A Portfolio Holder Assistant (PHA) may be appointed to support a Portfolio Holder or Portfolio Holders in carrying out their duties in a variety of ways. For example:

- (a) A PHA may be appointed to assist a Portfolio Holder in all his/her duties or to assist in a particular specific area.
- (b) A PHA may be appointed to assist several Portfolio Holders in a particular specified area which is covered by more than one Portfolio Holder.
- (c) A PHA may be appointed to assist two or more Portfolio Holders in different specified areas.

On appointment, the specific duties of the PHA must be specified and will also be subject to the following general considerations. PHAs have no decision-making powers.

Within their specified duties, PHAs will:

1. Keep abreast of best national practice and new initiatives and brief the Portfolio Holder accordingly.
2. Assist the Portfolio Holder in establishing and maintaining professional, effective and efficient working relationships with opposition groups, Chairs of Committees and with other Councillors.
3. Undertake such responsibilities as may arise, or be required, from time to time other than decision-making.
4. Deputise, as required, for the Portfolio Holder within the limits or conditions set by the Portfolio Holder where this does not require direct Executive decision taking.
5. Assist the Portfolio Holder to manage their workload and deal with such issues or projects (whether long term or time limited) as shall be agreed with them.
6. Develop direct, effective working contacts with Corporate Directors, Directors, Heads of Service and their staff and external partners, and assist the Portfolio Holder with maintaining effective policy and management links with them.
7. Act as a point of contact for the Portfolio Holder within the relevant political group.

8. Advise and support the Portfolio Holder on particular and ad hoc issues and opportunities arising from their own participation in Council activity and externally, and also on strategic issues.
9. Help to promote specific media opportunities relating to key projects, with regular feedback to the Portfolio Holder.