

Report for: Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 26 October 2026

Item number: 11

Title: Appointment of non-voting co-opted Member to the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel

Report authorised by: Fiona Alderman, Director of Legal and Governance

Lead Officer: Ayshe Simsek, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Report for Key/ Non-Key Decision: N/A

1. Describe the issue under consideration.

- 1.1 The report seeks formal approval of the appointment of Natasha Benn, Chair of the Haringey Joint Partnership Board, as a non – voting co-opted member, to the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel for the 2026 – 2027 municipal year.
- 1.2 Natasha Benn is the current chair of the Haringey Joint Partnership Board and Trustee of Disability Action Haringey, and Director of ROARing Voices and Rebels United.
- 1.3 The Haringey Joint Partnership Board (JPB) has been a key partner of Haringey Council since 2017 and works on ensuring that people living with dementia, older people, people with learning disabilities, severe and complex needs, autism or physical disabilities, and carers have a voice in shaping how health and social care services are designed and delivered.
- 1.4 In her role as Chair of the JPB, Natasha Benn has introduced new ways of working, code of conduct, and has built strong relationships with Chairs of the six further Adults services related reference Groups. Natasha has a good record for establishing strong working relationships across Adult Social Care and the wider Council, as well as the wider voluntary and community sector and with residents.
- 1.5 The Joint Partnership Board is facilitated by the Bridge Renewal Trust. The Board and its members continue to work in coproduction with the Council and NHS partners, championing the voices of people with lived experience to achieve significant improvements in local services.
- 1.6 This appointment has been strongly endorsed by the Chief Executive of the Bridge Renewal Trust and the Director for Adult Social Care.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Natasha Benn be appointed to the Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel as a non-voting co-opted member for the municipal year 2026/2027.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 The proposed appointment supports the purpose of the Council's Protocol for Non-Voting Co-opted Members by bringing additional external challenge, lived experience, specialist knowledge and community insight into the work of Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel.
- 4.2 The proposed appointee has extensive experience of representing and advocating for residents in the community. Through her various roles, she has established strong links with residents, community organisations, the council and health partners.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 The committee can decide not to appoint another non-voting co optee to the panel. This option was considered and rejected because the Panel has identified a need for additional experience to support the delivery of its work programme for 2026/2027. The proposed appointee is well placed to provide the expertise to support the effectiveness of the Panel's scrutiny work.

6. Background information

- 6.1 In relation to scrutiny, the Local Government Act 2000 made provision for the co-option of non-elected members to Overview and Scrutiny Committees in order to bring additional expertise and skills to scrutiny work and to increase public engagement with scrutiny.
- 6.2 In January 2021 the Standards Committee agreed a protocol on non – voting co-opted members which put in place the process for recruitment, completion of register of interest form and made clear, adherence to the Member Code of Conduct.
- 6.3 The Standards Committee considered and agreed an updated protocol on non-voting co-opted member appointments at their meeting in March 2025. This was in accordance with their responsibilities for maintaining high standards of conduct and considering amendments to the Constitution and recommending proposals to full Council for approval.
- 6.4 The updated and agreed protocol, attached at Appendix 1, responded to observations and comments made by the Constitution Working Group.
- 6.5 There was a need to update the protocol to ensure that it was as robust as possible and given that the last update was completed in 2021. The decision making for appointments of non – voting members was previously assigned, in

the Constitution, to the scrutiny panels. This was regarded as an anomaly given that Panels do not have decision making powers. This responsibility has been added to the terms of reference for Overview and Scrutiny Committee and updates to the Constitution agreed by Full Council on 24th March 2025.

6.6 The Panels can appoint up to 3 non-voting members and nominations can come forward from established community groups or be individuals that provide additional expertise and skills. At the first OSC meeting in June 2026, the panel appointed 2 non-voting co-optees, one to the Children Panel and one to the Adults & Health Panel.

6.7 The Protocol for Non-Voting Co-Opted Members provides that appointments should ordinarily be made at the start of the municipal year and considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis. However, this appointment is being sought in October 2026, on an exceptional basis for the reasons explained below:

- The start of the municipal year followed a local election which resulted in a change in administration. The newly constituted Overview and Scrutiny committee, had not, by the date of the first meeting, fully developed its scrutiny work plan for the municipal year 2026/2027.
- A new Chair was appointed to the Adults and Health Panel in on the 22nd of June 2026. That chair subsequently stepped down, and a new chair was appointed on the 21st of July 2026.
- Subsequent development of the Adults and Health Panel's work programme in September/ October 2026, identified a clear need for additional expertise, insight and lived experience perspective in relation to the panel's planned scrutiny activity. It was therefore not possible earlier in the municipal year to determine whether an additional non-voting co-optee was required and, if so, the particular skills, experience and community links that would best support delivery of the agreed work programme.
- The proposed appointee brings significant skills and experience and strongly meets the non – voting co-optee criteria set out at paragraph 2.3 of the attached Protocol.
- The organisations the proposed co-optee represents meets the criteria of the protocol, set out at section 3.1. The proposed appointee is the chair of an established community group and already has a working relationship with the Council.

6.8 The application has been submitted by the appointee in accordance with the protocol and references provided. This has been considered against the protocol as well as the endorsements of senior officers.

7. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Director of Legal & Governance, Equalities)

Finance

7.1 There is no payments for non - voting co-opted members and no financial implications.

Legal

- 7.2 The Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report. Section 9FA Local Government Act 2000 provides that an Overview and Scrutiny committee of a local council may include persons who are not members of the Council. Part 4 Section G (3.1) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, as set out in the Council's Constitution, applies.
- 7.3 Whilst the protocol envisages that appointments will normally be determined at the start of the municipal year, the protocol does not prohibit the committee from considering an in-year appointment. In this case, the appointment is sought on an exceptional basis following the appointment of a new Panel Chair, the absence of a fully developed work programme at the start of the municipal year, and the subsequent identification of a specific need for the skills and experience offered by the proposed appointee. The proposed appointee meets the requirements of the protocol and has been assessed as capable of making a meaningful contribution to the work of the Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel. Having regard to the particular circumstances set out in this report, it is open to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to approve this appointment.

Equality

- 7.4 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:
- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.
- 7.5 The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.
- 7.6 Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

8 Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 - Non – Voting Member Protocol.