

Bolton Council

THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF BOLTON

Appointment of Independent Person

APPLICATION PACK

Dear Applicant.

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON
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Thank you for your expression of interest in the appointment to the Council of an Independent Person. I have pleasure in enclosing an application pack which contains.

1. Background information about the borough of Bolton.
2. Information relating to the Code of Conduct for Members.
3. Applicant Information: Role Description and Role Specification.
4. Application Process.

The Council is required to appoint an Independent Person to help it discharge its duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.

Restrictions on Appointment

Certain individuals are restricted from applying for this position. You cannot be an Independent Person if you are:

- (a) A councillor, co-opted member or officer of the Borough Council of Bolton, or,
- (b) A councillor, co-opted member or officer of Blackrod Town Council, Horwich Town Council or Westhoughton Town Council, or,
- (c) A relative or close friend of a person in (a) or (b) above.

A relative is defined as:

- (a) Your spouse or civil partner;
- (b) Any person you are living with as if you are spouses or civil partners;
- (c) Your grandparent;
- (d) Any person who is a lineal descendent of your grandparent;
- (e) A parent, brother, sister or child of anyone in paragraphs (a) or (b);
- (f) The spouse or civil partner of anyone with paragraphs (c), (d) or (e) or
- (g) Any person living with a person within paragraphs (c), (d) or (e) as if they were spouse or civil partner of that person.

The appointment process will be undertaken by senior members of the Council. Interview dates will be fixed once shortlisting of candidates has taken place. The successful applicant(s) will receive specific training to enable them to undertake their new role effectively.

Please note that this is not a job vacancy, and should you be appointed as an Independent Person, you will not be an employee of the Council.

Your 2 referees will be contacted without further notice to you, unless you indicate to the contrary.

If you require further assistance please contact Gill Taylor on 01204 331101 or by email to gill.taylor@bolton.gov.uk.

Thank you again for your interest and I look forward to hearing from you.

Helen Gorman
Borough Solicitor

Background

Regional Composition

Bolton is a vibrant and diverse town in Greater Manchester, known for its rich industrial heritage, strong community spirit, and dynamic local governance. With a population of approximately 302,000, Bolton is one of the largest towns in the North West, offering a mix of urban and rural landscapes across its 14,000 hectares.

The borough comprises a wide range of communities and neighbourhoods, with around 130,000 households, reflecting a broad spectrum of housing types and tenures. Bolton is home to a thriving voluntary sector, active civic participation, and a commitment to inclusive public services.

As a local authority, Bolton Council is dedicated to transparency, accountability, and high standards of conduct—values that underpin the role of the Independent Person in supporting the Council's ethical framework.

Borough History

The Borough Council of Bolton was established in 1974 combining Bolton Borough Council with Farnworth, Kearsley and South Turton and the free-standing towns of Little Lever, Horwich, Blackrod and Westhoughton. Bolton Council became a unitary authority following the abolition of the Greater Manchester Council in April 1986.

Political Overview

Bolton is divided into 20 Wards each of which elects three councillors for a term of up to four years. Bolton Council has sixty councillors, currently made up of 24 members of the Labour Party (including 8 members of the Labour and Cooperative Party), 15 members of the Conservative Party, 6 members of the Liberal Democrat Party, 5 members of Farnworth and Kearsley First, 5 members who form the Communities First group, 3 members of Horwich and Blackrod First Independents and 1 Independent member.

Demographics

Some of the neighbourhoods in Bolton, particularly in the north of the borough and around Lostock, are among the most affluent in the country. However, by contrast, the borough also covers some of the country's most deprived neighbourhoods.

Bolton is a richly diverse borough, with 31.2% of its population identifying as part of an ethnic minority group¹. The breakdown in the 2022 Census is as follows:

White (Total): 71.95%

White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British – 68.76%

White Other – 3.19%

Asian/Asian British/Asian Welsh (Total): 20.15%

Pakistani – 9.43%

Indian – 8.87%

Other Asian – 1.85%

Black/Black British/Black Welsh/Caribbean or African: 3.80%

Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups: 2.24%

Other Ethnic Group: 1.87%

MEMBERS' CONDUCT

Independent Person

The role of the Independent Person is key to the complaints process in that you may be consulted by i) the Council before it makes a finding as to whether a Councillor or co-opted member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct; and ii) by the Councillor or co-opted member against whom the complaint has been made. You will be expected to attend meetings of the Hearings Panel in fulfilling your role.

Frequency of meetings

The Hearings Panel will meet as and when required to consider a complaint.

Remuneration

An annual fee of £547 has been fixed for the Independent Person by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Main Duties and Responsibilities

To undertake the statutory role of Independent Person appointed under section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 and to help the Council discharge its duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst members and co-opted members by:

- Advising the Monitoring Officer in connection with the assessment and investigation of complaints under the Code of Conduct for Members.
- Considering investigation reports following complaints under the Code.
- Advising the Hearings Panel in connection with the complaints and potential sanctions where failure to comply with the Code has been established.
- Advising members of the Borough Council of Bolton and of Blackrod, Horwich and Westhoughton Town Councils in connection with complaints made against them under the Code.

ROLE SPECIFICATION

Essential (E)/Desirable (D)

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|---|---|
| 1. Experience of dealing with complaints | D |
| 2. Ability to absorb key information from complex reports and make impartial and objective observations | E |
| 3. Good written and oral communication skills | E |
| 4. Ability to reach balanced and reasoned conclusions | E |
| 5. Willingness to receive training | E |

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|---|---|
| 6. Ability to work as part of a team | E |
| 7. Knowledge of local government and the role of elected members | D |
| 8. Knowledge of rules of natural justice and human rights principles | D |
| 9. Understanding of how to manage confidential information | D |
| 10. Ability to demonstrate and promote a commitment to the Council's policies | D |
| 11. Able to attend day-time meetings, sometimes at short notice | E |

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Council adopted a revised Code of Conduct in 2024 which can be found on the Council's website at www.bolton.gov.uk.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Closing Date

The closing date for receipt of applications is **10am on 5 January 2026**.

Please submit your c.v. with a covering letter expressing your interest in the post to:

Mrs Helen Gorman
Borough Solicitor
The Borough Council of Bolton
Town Hall
Bolton
BL1 1RU

or by e-mail to Helen.gorman@bolton.gov.uk

Your letter should include contact details for 2 referees.

The selection of candidates will be strictly in accordance with the 'Role Description' and 'Role Specification' outlined in this pack and will be based on the information contained **in your application only**, as supported by references.

Acknowledgements

Your application will be acknowledged and you will be advised as to whether you have been successful in due course.

Selection

Short listing for this appointment will be based upon an assessment of how applicants meet the criteria in the 'Role Specification' as evidenced by the application. The Interview Panel will be made up of senior members of the Council.