



South East RCC

Board member and Chair of Audit and Risk Committee Job

Description

Job Title:	Board member and chair of audit committee
Location:	Hybrid with quarterly in-person meetings
Term:	TBC, but expected to be three or four year term, with the possibility for extension beyond this for a further term.
<p>We are seeking a board member with a strong financial background to chair the South East Regional Care Cooperative (SE RCC)'s Audit committee.</p> <p>The full job description is included below.</p> <p>For an informal chat about this role, please contact recruitment@southeastrcc.gov.uk.</p>	
Background and vision for the organisation	
<p>RCC pathfinder background</p> <p>The previous Government launched the RCC pathfinder programme under the "Stable Homes, Built on Love" implementation plan, which stemmed from Recommendation 5.2 of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care led by Josh MacAlister in May 2022.</p> <p>The South East won the opportunity to be a pathfinder area in a competitive process as part of this programme, giving the region an unprecedented opportunity to work collaboratively to address the collective challenges the region is facing. The DfE has made £1.95m available of revenue to support the development of the RCC between April 2024 and December 2025 and up to £5m capital to support the aims of the project.</p> <p>The RCC project team started work in April 2024 and is in the process of setting up the RCC as a social enterprise to go live in December 2025. Throughout the project, a Board made up of local authorities in the region, has fed into the RCC design and made key decisions about the project's direction.</p> <p>In February 2025, 15 local authorities agreed to fund the RCC for an initial three-year period from June 2025. This will allow the RCC to establish itself and build benefits over time.</p> <p>SE RCC vision and priorities</p> <p>There are over 80,000 looked-after children in England, with almost 14% residing in the South East. This makes it the second most populous region in the UK by number of looked after children. Between 2017 and 2024 this number rose by 11%, increasing both absolutely and as a proportion of the population.</p>	



Services for these children and young people also comprise the largest area of overspend in children's services: local authorities in the South East overspent by £239m vs budget in 2022/23. This is the largest area of overspend in children's services (63% of total children's services overspend) and much of this is the result of the cost of placements, particularly due to residential care spending increases.

With increasing numbers of looked after children, rising costs and outcomes that aren't good enough, there is a compelling argument for taking a different approach to providing high quality local care for these children and young people.

The South East RCC is an important new independent organisation focused on doing things differently by bringing local authorities together to improve outcomes for looked after children in the region, whilst ensuring local authorities experience better value for money.

The RCC's vision (written to children and young people) is:

"By working together across the South East, we will provide the right care for you that is available locally and when needed. We will be loving, caring and consistent with high aspirations for you. We will listen to you, put your needs first and will not give up on you. By working together, your voice will be stronger and more influential."

The RCC will bring together sector learning, data and an innovative approach to commissioning and managing high quality placements and services across the region. It will help address some of the fundamental issues in the children's social care market with a focus on quality and consistency of provision together with value for money.

The RCC's strategic priorities are:

1. **Promoting the Voices of Children and Young People:** The RCC is committed to ensuring that the voices of children and young people are at the heart of everything we do. We will actively engage with them to understand their needs, preferences, and aspirations, and incorporate their feedback into our activities and decision-making processes.
2. **Commissioning Placements for Complex Children:** We recognise the unique challenges faced by children with complex needs. Our innovative, multi-agency approach to commissioning regionally will focus on creating tailored placements that provide the highest quality of care and support, ensuring that these children receive the specialised services they require.
3. **Regional Working and Partnerships:** Collaboration is key to our success. By fostering strong partnerships with local authorities, health services, the youth justice system, and other stakeholders, we will create a cohesive and integrated approach across the South East. This regional cooperation will enhance the quality and consistency of services commissioned.
4. **Workforce Development:** A stable, skilled and dedicated workforce is essential for delivering high-quality care. The RCC will invest in workforce development through training, professional development opportunities, and the establishment of a workforce academy. This will ensure that our staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to meet the evolving needs of children and young people.



5. **Setting Up a Sustainable Organisation:** Sustainability is at the core of our vision. We will build a resilient and adaptable organisation that can respond to changing demands and continue to provide excellent services in the long term. Central to this is leveraging data and evidence to inform our strategies, optimise resource allocation, and maintain financial stability.

The RCC will be in 'start-up' mode for the first two to three years of operation. During this phase, it will explore other potential synergies and income generation strategies. An entrepreneurial spirit will be nurtured in the culture and ways of working to ensure that staff are not limited by today's service design in the future.

The RCC will be accountable to a Board of executive and non-executive directors and an advisory board with representatives from 15 South East local authorities.

Role purpose

As Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, to manage the governance and running of the Audit committee Board, including assuring that appropriate financial controls are in place and preparing for the annual audit process.

As a member of the Board, to further the SE RCC's mission, manage its business, and ensure that it fulfils its statutory duties.

As an individual, to fulfil statutory duties as necessary.

Responsibilities

Chair of Audit and Risk Committee:

- Oversee the organisation's financial reporting processes and procedures, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.
- Monitor effectiveness of internal financial and non-financial controls.
- Oversee the annual audit process.
- Monitor internal and external risks to the organisation and advise on mitigating strategies.
- Advise the Board on the organisation's risk appetite, given the operating constraints in any given period.
- Provide the board with independent assurance that the organisation's financial position is reflected accurately in accounts.

General as part of the Board:

Strategic planning and oversight:

- Work closely with the board and executive team to shape the organisation's mission, vision and strategic direction.
- Use your expertise to steer and shape the annual business planning cycle.
- Monitor organisational performance against the agreed strategy and hold the leadership team accountable for delivery of such.
- Track external risks to the organisation and use your experience to advise on mitigating activities against these.



- Contribute to building the organisation's public profile through marketing and publicity.
- Financial oversight:
- Review the organisation's financial affairs, ensuring appropriate risk management and effective use of capital.
- Performance management:
- Evaluate and hold the Chief Executive accountable to a high standard of performance.
 - Participate in selection of a new Chief Executive when necessary.
- Long term sustainability:
- Work closely with the leadership team to develop long-term strategies (five plus years) for the organisation's future.
 - Help the organisation to determine appropriate governance structures as it develops.
 - Build and enhance the reputation of the organisation.
- Compliance:
- Ensure that the organisation fulfils its statutory duties, including:
 - Maintaining full and accurate accounting records for each financial period.
 - Producing a Directors' report and accounts for each financial year.
 - Ensuring that all statutory documents are prepared and filed with the appropriate regulatory body as and when required.
 - Promoting and ensuring health and safety throughout the organisation.
 - Promoting and ensuring equity and diversity across the organisation.

Expectations

- Work in accordance with all policies and procedures of the organisation.
- Work within the organisation's mission and values.
- Work in accordance with all relevant legislation.
- Fulfil the statutory duties of a Director, including:
 - Acting within powers.
 - Promoting the success of the organisation.
 - Exercising independent judgment.
 - Exercising reasonable care, skill and diligence.
 - Avoiding conflicts of interest.
 - Not accepting benefits from third parties.
 - Declaring any interest in an existing or proposed transaction or arrangement.

Knowledge and experience

Essential:

- Highly developed financial management skills.
- A valid accountancy qualification (CIMA, ACCA or ICAEW).
- Experience of managing the audit process from an internal or external perspective.
- Strong risk management experience.
- Experience of designing and operating robust governance procedures in a professional environment.
- Experience of operating at a senior level in a professional environment.
- An understanding of the pressures, issues and opportunities in children's social care.
- Strong strategic and commercial acumen.



- Experience of building relationships and working effectively with a range of senior stakeholders and teams.

Desirable:

- Experience of developing a business through the start-up phase.

Skills and behaviours

- An independent operator who always acts with the highest level of integrity.
- Ability to make evidence-based decisions, utilising internal and external data sets.
- Ability to listen effectively, challenge constructively and work within a collective.
- Ability to exercise independent judgment.
- Committed to the mission and vision of the RCC.

Time commitment

The total time commitment is anticipated to be around 12 days a year, which will include:

Audit and Risk Committees held quarterly, with additional meetings if necessary. These may be in person, hybrid or remote.

Board meetings held quarterly, with an additional business planning session each September. Quarterly meetings will be held in person, with any extraordinary meetings convened virtually.

In addition to quarterly board meetings, the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee will be expected to dedicate additional time to meeting with the Chief Operating Officer, as well as other key staff, to discuss the organisation's financial position.