

Report to: Standards Committee



Date of Meeting 16 January 2025

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Appointment of Independent Representatives, Independent Persons and Town and Parish Representatives

Report summary:

The Standards Committee includes two non-voting Parish Councillor representatives (with three spaces) and 3 non-voting independent members who play valuable input into the work of the Standards Committee. In addition, in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 the Council has two Independent Persons who have a key role in the consideration of Code of Conduct complaints, alongside the Monitoring Officer. A number of those role holders were appointed at Full Council in May 2021 for a period of four years. Those roles will therefore expire in May 2025 and this report therefore seeks the Committees approval of the process for re-advertising and appointing to these roles.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That the Standards Committee:-

1. approve the recruitment process and note the timescale for recruitment.
2. Delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to agree the recruitment paperwork
3. To appoint a panel of 3 members for the interview panel to include the Chair or Vice Chair of the Committee

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the critical Independent and Town and Parish perspective on the Committee is retained and that the Council is compliant with the Localism Act 2011 in relation to the appointment of Independent Persons.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergency Response
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☒ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☒ Communications and Democracy
- ☐ Economy
- ☐ Finance and Assets

- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; The Authority has a legal duty to appoint an Independent Person and would be unable to carry out its statutory duties relating to the Code of Conduct without appointing at least one IP. Any subject member who is subject to a Code of Conduct complaint or Standards Committee investigation has a statutory right to consult with the IP. If that is not possible because there is no IP, the Authority is at risk of challenge.

Links to background information None

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ A supported and engaged community
- ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
- ☒ Financially secure and improving quality of services

Report in full

1. The Localism Act 2011 requires the Authority to have arrangements in place for dealing with complaints of breaches of the Code of Conduct. This must include provision for the appointment of at least one Independent Person (IP). The Council currently has two IP's. In addition, the Council has three Independent Representatives and two Town and Parish representatives (with one vacancy) on the Standards Committee. These are co-opted non-voting appointments. These representatives provide critical independent and town and parish perspectives.
2. With the exception of one Independent Representative, all of these appointments were made in May 2021 for a period of 4 years and are therefore due to expire in May 2025. It is critical therefore that we have a process in place to ensure that these positions are re-advertised and recruited to, to ensure we maintain this critical input and are compliant with the Localism Act 2011.
3. Delegated authority is sought for the Monitoring Officer to prepare the recruitment paperwork in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and to conduct a recruitment process as follows:-
 - a. It is proposed that we advertise the positions on our website and social media accounts, as well as circulating details to the parish councils within our area. Applicants would be invited to complete an application for the role and then applications will be shortlisted by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.
 - b. It is suggested that the interview panel comprises three members of the Committee, supported by the Monitoring Officer (or their deputy). Ideally this would be the Chair or Vice Chair plus two other members. Members are invited to volunteer.

- c. We are seeking to complete the advertisement and interviews by April 2025 and for the Full Council to be asked to approve the appointments at its annual meeting on 14 May 2025.
- d. The term of office is currently set as a four-year period.
- e. A suggested timetable for the recruitment is set out below:

Date	Action
W/C 3 March 2025	Advertise the Vacancies
28 March 2025	Deadline for applications
W/C 31 March 2025	Shortlisting and invite applicants to interview
W/C 7 April 2025	Interviews
W/C 15 April 2025	Advise successful applicants
2 May 2025	Report deadline for Annual Council
14 May 2025	Full Council approves the appointments

- 4. The Independent Representatives and Independent Persons will receive an annual allowance of £400 in accordance with the adopted Scheme of Member Allowances.

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications directly arising from this recruitment process as the positions will be advertised on our website, on social media and through Town and Parish Councils. The successful applicants will receive the same allowance as existing role holders in accordance with the Council's adopted Scheme of Member Allowances.

Legal implications:

There are no significant legal implications directly arising from this report.

