

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM 19

COUNCIL MEETING

29 MARCH 2017

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

MONITORING OFFICER: BRYN ROBERTS

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To seek Council's agreement to the appointment of new Independent Persons.

BACKGROUND

2. Council will be aware that it is required, under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, to appoint Independent Persons to act in relation to, amongst other things, standards and Code of Conduct complaints.
3. It is now time for the Council to conduct fresh appointments, and the current Independent Person has indicated that, given the growth in her practice and her Judicial commitments, she does not wish to continue in the role.
4. Applications for the role were, therefore, sought, and two applications were received. The first was from Mr Geoff Fell, a former Solicitor and Coroner, and previously an Independent Person with Middlesbrough Council. The second was from Mr Tom Mitchell, a practising barrister with the Public Defenders Service, with in excess of 15 years' experience. Mr Mitchell also expressed an interest in the role of pensions adjudicator, which was also advertised.
5. The Monitoring Officer has met with both candidates, and is satisfied as to their suitability of character and qualifications. It is also recognised that it is good practice to have more than one Independent Person appointed by the Council, and it is therefore the Monitoring Officer's conclusion that both candidates ought to be appointed. In addition, it is the Monitoring Officer's view that Mr Mitchell is suitably qualified to assume the role of independent pensions adjudicator.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7. It is recommended that Council agrees to the appointment of Mr Fell and Mr Mitchell as Independent Persons, with effect from 1 April 2017.
8. It is further recommended that Council agrees to the appointment of Mr Mitchell as its independent pensions adjudicator, with effect from 1 April 2017.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

9. There are no background papers to this report.

AUTHOR

Bryn Roberts
Monitoring Officer