

Report of:	Standards Committee
Submitted to:	Council
Date:	25 October 2023
Title:	Appointment of Independent People (Standards Committee)
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Strategic priority:	Quality of service
Key decision:	No
Why:	Not applicable
Urgent:	No
Why:	

Executive summary

Following a recruitment exercise to recruit Independent People, the Standards Committee recommends to Council the appointment a further two Independent People namely David Wilson and Shada Mellor to the Standards Committee for a period of 4 years.

Purpose

1. To seek approval of the recommendation of the Standards Committee to appoint two Independent People for an initial term of 4 years.

Background and relevant information

2. Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 and our arrangements for dealing with Member Code of Conduct complaints require an Independent Persons views to be sought by the Monitoring Officer before making a decision on a Member Code of Conduct allegation.
3. The best practice recommendations report published in January 2019 by the Committee on Standards in Public Life recommends that local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.
4. An Independent Person should be appointed for a term of no more than four years.
5. The Council has been operating with two Independent Persons, however one has decided to move on from the role and in terms of good practice and local requirements further Independent Persons are required to provide resilience and continuity.
6. Following a recruitment exercise which was panelled by the Chair of Standards Committee, Head of Legal Services (Places) and Head of Legal Services (People), the candidates were asked a series of questions to test their suitability for the role against the criteria set out in the person specification and each had a general discussion about local government ethical standards.
7. The Panel decided to recommend David Wilson and Shada Mellor for appointment as Independent Persons to the Standards Committee. Both candidates demonstrated that they met the criteria for the role, had a good understanding of the role and an enthusiasm to support the Standards Committee in upholding high ethical standards.
8. Mr John Race will remain in post until the end of his tenure and Geoff Fell has recently left his position as Independent Person having served a considerable time at the Council.

What decision(s) are being recommended?

That the Council:

- Approves the appointment of Shada Mellor and David Wilson to serve as the Council's Independent Persons for a term of 4 years.

Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

9. The Localism Act 2011 requires Local Authorities to have in place an Independent Person and the best practice recommendations report published in January 2019 by the Committee on Standards in Public Life recommends that local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons

Other potential decision(s) and why these have not been recommended

10. N/A as it is a legislative requirement.

Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Legal

11. Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 and our arrangements for dealing with Member Code of Conduct complaints require an Independent Persons views to be sought by the Monitoring Officer before making a decision on a Member Code of Conduct allegation.

Strategic priorities and risks

12. N/A

Human Rights, Equality and Data Protection

13. N/A

Financial

14. Although the role of the Independent Person is voluntary, an allowance of £950.00 per annum will be paid (per role) to cover any expenses incurred whilst carrying out the role. The allowance for the role is paid from Members Budget and there are sufficient budget provisions to accommodate the proposed roles.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Training	Head of Legal Services	November 2023

Appendices

1	N/A
2	
3	

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
N/A		

Contact:

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