

## **Committee: Standards and General Purposes Committee**

**Date: 15 March 2018**

Wards: All

### **Subject: Appointment of Independent Person**

Lead officer: Paul Evans, Assistant Director Corporate Governance

Lead member: Councillor Peter McCabe, Chair, Standards and General Purposes Committee

Contact officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services, 0208 545 3864

### **Recommendations:**

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1. That the Standards and General Purposes Committee agrees that an interview panel comprising one councillor from each political group should be appointed to interview and to recommend to Council the appointment of one Independent Person to serve for a period of three years.
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## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. The Localism Act 2011 requires the council to appoint at least one Independent Person. The now defunct Standards Committee previously put arrangements in place for the recruitment of two Independent Persons.
- 1.2. The term of office of one of the Independent Persons, Derek Prior, ends on 12 July 2018
- 1.3. This report therefore seeks approval to commence the recruitment of a new Independent Person and to appoint an interview panel, comprising one councillor from each political group to interview all candidates and recommend to Council the appointment of the successful applicant.

## **2 DETAILS**

- 2.1. The Localism Act 2011 requires the council to appoint at least one Independent Person. The functions of the Independent Person, set out in the council's constitution, are:
  - The independent person must be consulted and views taken into account before the authority takes a decision on any allegation it has decided to investigate
  - The independent person may be consulted by the authority in circumstances where the authority is not taking a decision whether to investigate the allegation
  - The independent person may be consulted by a member of the authority against whom an allegation has been made
- 2.2. The council currently has two Independent Persons. Derek Prior was appointed in July 2015 and Pam Donovan was appointed in November 2016. Derek Prior's second term of office expires on 12 July 2018, thus creating a vacancy.

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

3.1. The Council must appoint at least one Independent Person.

3.2. The composition of the interview panel is discretionary.

### **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

4.1. None

### **5 TIMETABLE**

5.1. Officers will commence the recruitment of a new Independent Person as soon as possible, subject to the agreement of this Committee.

5.2. It is anticipated that an advert will be placed in the local press and on the council's website in early April, with a closing date towards the end of April and interviews towards the end of May. The outcome will be reported to Council at its meeting on 4 July.

### **6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1. Independent Persons are invited to attend meetings of Standards and General Purposes Committee and are paid £100 per meeting. They are also paid £100 for each consultation meeting with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

6.2. The recommendations in this report will not lead to any increase in the overall budget for allowances.

### **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1. See body of report.

### **8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

8.1. None specific to this report.

### **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. None specific to this report

### **10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1. None specific to this report

### **11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

- None

### **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1. None