

11. **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS (AGM)**

Purpose of the report

1. Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, the Authority is required to appoint at least one Independent Person to assist the Authority in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct amongst all Members.

The Independent Person will be consulted on the decision to investigate complaints and before it makes a decision on an investigated complaint. The Independent Person may be consulted on other standard matters, including by the Member who is subject to an allegation. The Authority appointed the following persons to be Independent Persons for a term of 4 years ending at the Authority AGM in July 2016: Mrs Joan Carr and Mr Robert Ashworth.

Key issues

2.
 - The Authority is asked to consider and endorse the recommendations of the Interview Panel set up to consider applications received asking to be considered for the two Independent Persons posts.

Recommendation

3.
 1. **To appoint Philip Sunderland and Jean Walker as Independent Persons for a term of office of 4 years ending at the AGM in 2020.**

How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

4. The Authority has a statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct for its elected, appointed and co-opted Members.

Background

5. The Authority has previously agreed that, in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, two persons are appointed as Independent Persons to advise the Authority and individual Members in the case when a complaint has been received, on matters relating to ethical standards and complaints against Members. This report makes recommendations on the individuals to be appointed to this role.

Proposals

6. Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 the Authority is responsible for deciding how to deal with standards issues at a local level, including adopting its own local code and determining what arrangements it will adopt to deal with complaints.
7. The Act provides that the Authority must appoint an Independent Person to assist in discharging these responsibilities.
8. In July 2012 the Authority appointed two Independent Persons for a period of four years with their term of office ending at the 2016 Annual Meeting. As the two existing Members are not eligible for re-appointment the Authority advertised for two new Independent Persons to be appointed from July 2016 to July 2020. The advertisement generated a good level of interest and applications were received from a number of high quality candidates.
9. On 16 June 2016, the Chair of Audit, Resources and Performance Committee and the Monitoring Officer interviewed 7 shortlisted applicants and recommend to Authority,

that on merit, Philip Sunderland and Jean Walker be appointed as the Independent Persons for a term of office of 4 years ending at the AGM in 2020.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

10. **Financial:** There will be a call on existing resources for the training and induction of those appointed as Independent Persons. In addition a fixed allowance of £945 per annum is payable to each Independent Person together with reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses. Both of these matters will be covered by existing budgets.
11. **Risk Management:** The Independent Persons will require ongoing support to be able to respond in their consultative capacity – this will be provided by the Monitoring Officer and the Deputy Monitoring Officer.
12. **Sustainability:** No issues identified.
13. **Background papers:** None.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Andrea McCaskie, Monitoring Officer, 23 June 2016.