



Northumberland

County Council

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

10 October 2019

INDEPENDENT CHAIRMAN AND PERSON - APPOINTMENT

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Executive Member: Councillor Nick Oliver, Corporate Services & Cabinet Secretary

Purpose of report

To advise members of the need to undertake a fresh recruitment process in respect of both the Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee and the Independent Person positions and to agree the detail of that process.

Recommendations

To (i) note the position relating to the need to reappoint to the positions of Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee and Independent Person and (ii) to establish an interview panel with delegated authority to make a recommendation to Council regarding the appointment to such positions.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the “We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone” priority included in the NCC Corporate Plan 2018-2021.

Key issues

1. Need to re-appoint to the positions of Independent Chairman of Standards Committee and Independent Person.
2. The Independent Chair and Independent Person will each be paid an allowance of £2,700 per annum which is already provided for within the Council's General Fund Budget.
2. Recommendation to create interview panel with delegated authority to make a recommendation to Council following consideration of the applications received including interview process.

Background

1. The current composition of this Committee provides for an Independent Chairman to preside over its meetings and to be a member champion for the promotion and maintenance of the Council ethical framework in respect of member conduct. While there is no statutory requirement for the Chairman of the Standards Committee to be independent the authority have previously determined that the position would benefit from such a status and the current incumbent, Mr Joe Jackson, was appointed in September 2013 which appointment has been renewed on two separate occasions. Again there is no statutory requirement as to the length of appointment but it is considered that the position should be exposed to a further open recruitment process.
2. In addition to the position of independent Chairman the Council are required, by the Localism Act 2011, to appoint at least one independent person who has a role to play primarily in the assessment of complaints in conjunction with the Monitoring Officer as well as supporting the work of the Standards Committee.. The current incumbent, Mrs Judith Common, was appointed in this capacity in compliance with the Localism Act in July 2012, an appointment which has also been renewed on two separate occasions and again while there is no statutory requirement or restriction on the length of appointment it is also considered that the position should be exposed to a further open recruitment process.
3. An advertisement in respect of both positions was published last month and circulated on social media inviting applications to be submitted by the 8th October 2019
3. It is recommended that an interview panel be set up comprising such members of the Committee that seem appropriate but perhaps limited to three with delegated authority to make an appropriate recommendation to Council as to whom should be appointed to the positions such authority to include the ability to recommend to Council as to whether more than one independent person should be appointed.
4. Following creation of the panel, if that is agreed, interviews will be arranged with a view to a recommendation regarding appointment being made to the next available Council meeting.

Implications

Policy	N/A
Finance and value for money	The Independent Chair and independent person will each be paid an allowance of £2,700 per annum which is already provided for within the Council's General Fund Budget.
Legal	These are set out in the body of the report
Procurement	N/A
Human Resources	The Council's recruitment and selection good practice standards would be adhered to in any selection process
Property	N/A
Equalities	N/A

(Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
Risk Assessment	N/A
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Customer Consideration	The appointment to these two positions gives customers an assurance in relation to the operation of the ethical standards regime
Carbon reduction	N/A
Health and Wellbeing	N/A
Wards	All divisions

Background papers

Council constitution

Report sign off

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	
Service Director Finance & Interim S151 Officer	Alison Elsdon
Relevant Executive Director	Kelly Angus
Chief Executive	Daljit Lally
Portfolio Holder(s)	Nick Oliver

Author and Contact Details

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