

Report to COUNCIL

13th March 2024

Appointment of Independent Persons under Localism Act 2011 - Standards

Officer Contact: Paul Entwistle, Director of Legal

1 Background

- 1.1 The Council is required under the Localism Act 2011 to appoint at least one Independent Person(s) to assist with Standards matters. Council have previously agreed to have four Independent Persons and there are current vacancies which have been advertised. The duties of the Independent Person include being consulted at various stages of standards conduct allegations against members and undertaking duties if required on matters relating to the dismissal of relevant officers under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) Regulations 2015
- 1.2 A panel comprising of a member representative from each of the three largest groups, namely, Councillors Dean, Hamblett and Sheldon, assisted by the Director of Legal, conducted the interviews to make a recommendation to Council.
- 1.3 The members recommend that Gillian McCarthy and Mark Reynolds be appointed as Independent Persons. It was considered that both candidates were suitable for the role. Gillian McCarthy has had a lengthy career working for ACAS in senior positions before retirement.. Mark Reynolds had a long career working in local government and for the Audit Commission before retirement.
- 1.4 It is recommended that Gillian McCarthy and Mark Reynolds are appointed as Independent Persons for a 4 year term. The current remaining Independent Person, Karen Williams, term of office expires in June 2024 and it is recommended that the term of office be extended for 4 years.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Gillian McCarthy and Mark Reynolds be appointed as Independent Persons for a 4 years term and Karen Williams's term of office be extended for another 4 years.

3 Financial Implications

None

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- 4 **Legal implications**
Council must appoint at least one independent person under the Localism Act 2011.
5. **Co-operative Implications**
None
6. **Human Resources Comments**
None
- 7 **Risk Assessments**
None
- 8 **IT Implications**
None
- 9 **Property Implications**
None
- 10 **Procurement Implications**
None
- 11 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**
None
- 12 **Community cohesion , including crime and disorder implications in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**
None
- 13 **Equality Impact- including implications for children and young people**
None
14. **Background Papers**
None