

## **Council – 8 September 2008**

### **Appointment of independent members to Standards and Audit Committee**

#### **1. Summary of report**

This report seeks approval to the appointment of three independent members to the Standards Committee and one independent member to the Audit Committee.

Independent members of the Standards Committee are appointed by rotation with two members of the Committee retiring each municipal year. An additional membership has been sought in this round of recruitment to bring the Committee to a full complement of six members.

The independent member of the Audit Committee is also to be appointed for a period of three years.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- (1) That Mr. Andrew Wood, Dr Kay Biscoomb and Ms. Kate McLeod are appointed as independent members to the Standards Committee for a period of three years until the end of the municipal year 2010/2011.
- (2) That Ms. Kate McLeod is appointed as independent member to the Audit Committee for a period of three years until the end of the municipal year 2010/2011.

#### **4. Resource and legal considerations**

Independent members are entitled to reasonable out of pocket expenses such as travelling/subsistence/other related expenses. These are difficult to quantify in advance and will be dependent on the Committee's level of activity during an independent member's period of office. It is anticipated that these costs will be met from existing corporate budgets.

#### **5. Equality implications**

When independent members are recruited, regard is taken to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and best practice in recruitment and selection and these procedures have been observed in making these appointments.

Independent members are bound by the Member's Code of Conduct and as such are required to promote equality. The independent members understand that they cannot unlawfully discriminate against any person and will treat people with respect regardless of their race, sexual orientation, gender or disability.

## **6. Background**

The Local Government Act 2000 and regulations thereunder require each authority to establish a Standards Committee of which 25% of that membership must comprise of independent members. This Committee currently consists of four elected members and six independent members.

## **7. The recruitment process**

The recruitment of independent members to both Committees follows publication of a public advertisement in the local press alongside a specially designed website.

The appointments can only be made if they are approved by a majority of the members of the authority and must not be related to or be a close friend of any Councillor or officer of the authority. Further they cannot have been a member or officer of the authority in the proceeding five years.

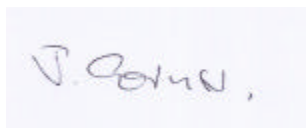
An interview panel comprising of Councillor J. Cook (nominee of Councillor I. Shires), Councillor A. Griffiths (nominee of Councillor J. O'Hare) and Councillor B. Cassidy (nominee of Councillor T. Oliver) interviewed the applicants.

Following deliberation, the panel unanimously agreed to appoint Mr. A. Wood, Dr. K. Biscomb and Ms. K. McLeod to the Standards Committee and Ms K. McLeod to the Audit Committee.

To ensure continuity and retention of service, the Standards Committee have agreed a system of "retirement by rotation" for their independent members. This means that two of the longest serving members of the six retire each year. Therefore, it is recommended that the appointments to the Standards Committee be for a period of three years or until the end of the municipal year 2010/2011.

The independent member to the Audit Committee is to be appointed for a period of three years which again ensures continuity and retention of service. It is recommended that this appointment be for a period of three years or until the end of the municipal year 2010/2011.

**Signed:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. O'Hare', is written on a light blue rectangular background.

**for Assistant Director of Legal & Constitutional Services  
and Monitoring Officer**

**Date:** 29th August 2008