

Agenda item:



Walsall Council

Standards Committee

30 October 2008

Appointment of independent members to Standards Committee

Summary of Report

This report advises the Committee of the recommendation that has been put before Council on 8 September 2008 to appoint Mr Andrew Wood, Dr Kay Biscomb and Ms Kate McLeod as independent members to the Standards Committee for a term of three years until the end of the municipal year 2010/2011.

Recommendations

- (1) That the content of the report be noted.

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 expected that these costs will be met from within existing budgets.

Citizen impact

None arising from this report.

Environmental impact

None arising from this report.

Performance and risk management issues

None arising from this report.

Equality implications

When independent members are recruited, regard is given to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and best practice in recruitment and selection procedures.

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

Consultation

None

Background papers

All published.

Signed:

Assistant Director of Legal and Constitutional Services and Monitoring Officer

Date:

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The Local Government Act, 2000 and regulations thereunder require each local authority to establish a Standards Committee of which 25% of the membership must comprise of independent members.

The Committee currently consists of four elected members and six independent members.

The appointment of an independent member can only be made if they are approved by a majority of the members of the authority and are not related to or are 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.

To ensure continuity and retention of service, the Committee 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.

Process of appointment:

Public advertisements for the appointment of three independent members to the Standards Committee and one independent member to the Audit Committee were placed in the local press alongside a specially designed website during May 2008.

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) sat and considered applicants who applied for the positions.

Following deliberation, the Panel unanimously agreed to appoint Mr Andrew Wood, Dr Kay Biscomb and Ms Kate McLeod to the Committee for a term of three years until the end of the municipal year 2010/2011.

The Panel have also recommended these appointments to Council.