



Standards Committee – 20 July 2005

Appointment of independent members to Standards Committee

Summary of report

This report advises the Committee of the decision of Council from its meeting on 4 July 2005 to appoint Dr. Kay Biscomb and Ms. Kate McLeod as independent members on the Standards Committee.

Recommendation

That the Committee note the appointment of Dr. Kay Biscomb and Ms. Kate McLeod as independent members of the Standards Committee for three years until the end of the 2007/2008 municipal year.

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 level of activity of the Standards Committee over their period of office. It is expected that can be met from existing corporate budgets.

Equality implications

Independent members have been recruited having regard to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and best practice in recruitment and selection procedures.

Independent members are bound by the Members code of conduct and as such are required to promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

Background

The Local Government Act 2000 and regulations there under require each authority to establish a Standards Committees of which 25% must be independent members (the Standards Committee consists of 4 elected members and 6 independent members).

The selection of independent members should follow a public advertisement and appointment can only be made if they are approved by a majority of the members of the authority, 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 preceding 5 years.

To ensure continuity and retention of experience this Committee during the last municipal year agreed a system of retirement by rotation for independent members, such that the 2 longest serving members of the 6 would retire each year.

Process of Appointment

Public advertisements for the appointment of two independent members to the Standards Committee were placed in local and ethnic minority press, the Council's Job Shop publication, jobs website and a "mail shot" was sent to community groups in the Borough during March and April 2005.

An interview panel comprising of Councillor Mrs. E.E. Pitt (nominee of Councillor I. Shires), Councillor Phillips (nominee of Councillor Oliver) and Councillor Zahid (nominee of Councillor Ansell) interviewed all applicants and following deliberation unanimously agreed to recommend to Council the appointment of the aforesaid applicants.

Signed:

**Assistant Director of Legal Services and
Monitoring Officer**

Date: 12 July 2005