
Standards Committee – 12th January, 2009

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Appointment of Independent Member to the Standards Committee

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the appointment of a third Independent Member to serve on the Standards Committee.

Background

2. At its meeting on 21st April, 2008, the Council approved a recommendation from the Interviewing Panel of the Standards Committee regarding the appointment of Mr. John Beards as the third Independent Member of the Standards Committee. Sadly, Mr. Beards passed away in October, 2008 and provision now needs to be made to fill the vacancy for the third independent Member.
3. The Council has previously approved the appointment of a third Independent Member in view of the role of the Standards Committee in respect of the local investigation of complaints. Three Sub-Committees have been appointed; namely the Referrals Sub-Committee; the Review Sub-Committee and the Hearings Sub-Committee. Regulations made by the Secretary of State require each Sub-Committee to be chaired by an Independent Member, reinforcing the need to fill the vacancy.
4. Following a public advertisement (as set out in the Appendix to this report), the applications received will be considered by a Panel of the Standards Committee comprising one Independent Member and appropriate elected Member representation to be determined at this meeting (eg: one Member from each political group). The Committee is requested to confirm the arrangements for the meetings of the Panel as set out below and nominate persons to serve on the Panel on this occasion.
5. The proposed timescale for the process is as follows:-

Public Advertisement	15 th January, 2009
Shortlisting (if necessary)	9 th February, 2009 (time to be confirmed)
Interviews	19 th February, 2009 (time to be confirmed)
Recommendation to full Council	23 rd February, 2009

Finance

6. The post of Independent Member is unpaid but an Independent Member is entitled to receive travelling expenses.

Law

7. The appointment of Independent Members to a Standards Committee is governed by Section 56 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008. At least 25% of the membership of the Standards Committee must be independent members and their appointment must be confirmed by full Council.

Equality Impact

8. The process of recruiting and interviewing for the post of Independent Member will comply fully with the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

Recommendations

9. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to place an advertisement for a third independent member of the Standards Committee as set out in the Appendix to this report.
10. That the Committee consider the membership of the Panel to undertake the shortlisting and interviewing process and nominate an Independent Member and elected Members to serve on the Panel as referred to in paragraph 4.
11. That the timescale for the appointment of the third Independent Member, as set out in paragraph 5, be approved.
12. That a recommendation on the appointment of the third Independent Member be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 23rd February, 2009.



.....
Philip Tart
Monitoring Officer

Contact Officer: Philip Tart / Steve Griffiths
Telephone: 01384 (81)5300 / 5235
Email: philip.tart@dudley.gov.uk steve.griffiths@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

Report to the Council dated 21st April, 2008

DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Standards Committee

Dudley M.B.C is seeking a third independent person to join the Standards Committee, whose principal function is to promote high standards of conduct by members of the Council and to determine complaints made under the Members' Code of Conduct.

If you are interested in promoting high standards in public life, then we would like to hear from you. You will need to be well organised, with the ability to deal with sensitive and complex issues, and have the confidence to express your views at meetings.

You are likely to be invited to attend at least four meetings of the Standards Committee during the year. You will also Chair a Sub-Committee to consider matters associated with the local investigation of complaints. Though this is not a salaried position, you will receive your travelling costs. Training will be provided.

If you would like an application form, please contact Philip Tart, Interim Director of Law and Property, Dudley M.B.C, 3 St James's Road, Dudley, DY1 1HZ. Telephone No: 01384 815300.

E-mail address:

Director.lawproperty@dudley.gov.uk

The closing date for this application is Friday, 6th February 2009.

