

COUNCIL



Report subject	Appointment of Independent Persons to the Standards Committee
Meeting date	21 May 2019
Report author	Tanya Coulter, Director, Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Contributors	Sian Ballingall, Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer Karen Tompkins, Deputy Head of Democratic Services
Wards	All Wards
Status	Public Report
Classification	For Decision
Executive summary	<p>The Council is required by the Localism Act 2011 to appoint Independent Persons who have a statutory role in providing advice and input to considerations of complaints made about Councillors. It is also proposed that the role within BCP will include working with the Standards Committee in all aspects of the Committee's work in respect of the ethical framework of the Council to provide external independent input.</p> <p>Further to the requirements of the legislation an external recruitment process was undertaken by officers. This included a national advertisement and interview process. The recruitment pack can be accessed as a background paper to this Report.</p> <p>Officers are recommending three Independent Persons are appointed. This is to aid resilience; provide cover in the case of conflicts of interest or absence; provide a wider range of external views and skills/knowledge.</p>

Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that the following be appointed to serve as Independent Persons for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.</p> <p>(i) Ian Sibley</p> <p>(ii) Paul Cashmore</p> <p>(iii) Jonathan Storey</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>To ensure that the Council complies with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and has independent input into the development of the Council's ethical governance framework.</p>

Background

1. Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, the Council is required to appoint at least one Independent Person to assist the Council in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct amongst its elected Councillors. The Independent Person must be consulted when complaints are formally investigated and come before the Standards Committee at a formal hearing for determination. The Independent Person may be consulted on other standards matters, and is also available to be contacted by a Councillor who is subject to a complaint.

2. Following an appointment process including public advertisement five candidates were shortlisted for interview. The interviews were undertaken by the Director of Law and Governance, the Deputy Monitoring Officer and the Deputy Head of Democratic Services. The recommendation from the interview panel is to appoint the following three Independent Persons all of whom demonstrated an extremely high level of commitment to the role and an understanding of the importance of the independence and commitment necessary. All expressed a strong desire to undertake the role and an understanding of the public sector context and the role of local government and the importance of good governance and standards for those in public service. They all have a connection to the local area. A very brief summary of their experience is below and further information can be provided to Councillors should they require it.
 - Ian Sibley – has worked within the armed services and then within the private sector as a personnel manager, and was also a Magistrate for a number of years until retiring from the bench in 2016. Has been a member of the Independent Monitoring Board for HM The Verne at Portland and

has served previously as a member of the Valuation Tribunal Service. In addition to other voluntary roles within the community, he was the Independent Person for Christchurch Borough Council and East Dorset Councils for a number of years.

- Paul Cashmore – in many different roles, both paid and voluntary roles, he has been a technical instructor, project manager, engineer, Samaritan, probation volunteer and foster parent. He has worked with the police, offenders, the military, vulnerable children and adults.
- Jonathan Storey – is currently a barrister and prior to this a civil servant. Has had experience in a wide range of areas within the civil service and as a barrister has been involved in work relating to professional standards and ethics within various professions and bodies.

Summary of financial implications

3. The Scheme of Allowances agreed by the Shadow Authority on 21 February 2019 makes provision for an allowance of £1,000 per annum to be paid to Independent Persons.

Summary of legal implications

4. Section 28(7) of the Localism Act provides that arrangements must be put in place under which allegations can be investigated and action taken which must include provision for the appointment of at least one independent person. The Localism Act 2011 does not limit the number of independent persons who can be appointed by an authority.

Summary of human resources implications

5. There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

Summary of environmental impact

6. There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

Summary of public health implications

7. There are no public health implications associated with this report.

Summary of equality implications

8. There are no equality implications associated with this report.

Summary of risk assessment

9. It should be acknowledged that promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct amongst its Councillors is crucial to good governance and decision-making and to the reputation of the Council.

Background papers

Recruitment Pack

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.