

Standards Committee

AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Report Title	STANDARDS COMMITTEE – INDEPENDENT MEMBER RECRUITMENT
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Date of Meeting:	18 October 2010
Directorate:	Chief Executive
Ward(s)	All

1. Summary

- 1.1 To inform the Standards Committee about the progress of the recruitment of a new Independent member to replace a retiring Independent member.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members resolve to begin to interview the 8 applicants who have submitted completed applications in response to the authority's advertised request to receive applications to fill the vacancy.

3. Report Background

3.1 The recruitment of an Independent Member.

- 3.2 The Council has undertaken a recruitment exercise to appoint an independent member in view of the pending retirement of an independent member. As it is obliged to do under legislation, the Council has advertised the pending vacancy in a local newspaper.

- 3.3 As has been noted at previous meetings of this Committee, the Council has on previous occasions experienced difficulty in recruiting to fill the vacancy and in particular it has noted an insufficient response from underrepresented community groups. In order to positively address this issue on this occasion the Council also informed Northampton University of the vacancy and the position was advertised using their internal website and advertising methods.

- 3.4 It is hoped that the 8 applicants will reflect a more representative response of the diverse community the Council serves. The Council will monitor the application responses received and this will be reported to the next meeting of Standards Committee.

- 3.5 In the light of the impending retirement of one of independent members the Borough Solicitor recommends that subject to suitability one appointment be made from the 8 candidates who have applied.
- 3.6 It may also be possible to persuade the retiring member to reconsider the date of retirement and stay on until a new appointment is made and also in view of the impending abolition of the Standards Board Regime as reported in other reports to this meeting. The Committee is reminded however that until the new legislation abolishing the Standards regime is in place, the local standards framework still exists and standards committees and monitoring officers have an obligation to keep the system operating.
- 3.7 In view of the Local government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 it is recommended that all candidates thought suitable but not actually appointed are kept in a 'pool' for future consideration.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Resources and Risk

This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance and those using the service and where such implications are material they have been described in the body of this report.

4.2 Legal

None other than those mentioned in the body of the report. Standards Committee is the appropriate body to consider the matters set out in this report.

4.3 Other Implications

4.3.1 This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of equal opportunities, personnel, crime and disorder and those using the service and where such implications are material; they have been described in the text of the report.

4.3.2 As one third of the membership of Standards Committee must, under the Council's constitution, be Independent Members the difficulty in recruiting to the role presents a significant risk to Standards Committee and the Council to the extent that the committee might be unable to function effectively due to insufficient Independent Membership. This risk can be mitigated by a focused campaign amongst underrepresented groups.

4.3.3 Continued vacancies amongst Independent Members may reduce public confidence in Standards Committee.

5. Background Papers

Advert and applications records held by the Borough Solicitor.

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