



Report for:	Council
Date of meeting:	15 th May 2019
PART:	I
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON AND INDEPENDENT MEMBERS
Contact:	Mark Brookes, Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services)
Purpose of report:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To recommend the appointment of an Independent Person pursuant to the Localism Act, who must be consulted when the Council is dealing with standards complaints and to recommend the appointment of two Independent Members to the Standards Committee. • To ask Council to consider the recommendation of the interview panel on the appointment of the Independent Person and two Independent Members
Recommendations	<p>That Council-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appoints Susan Johnson as the Council's Independent Person for a term of four years. 2. Appoints Caroline Guest and Gloria Gillespie as Independent Members of the Standards Committee for a term of four years.
Corporate	The promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct

objectives:	by Members of the Council will assist the Council in achieving its priorities of performance excellence and reputation and profile delivery.
Implications: 'Value For Money Implications'	There are financial and efficiency costs to the Council in having to deal with complaints made under the Code of Conduct. There are, therefore, value for money benefits to the Council in striving to ensure that complaints against Members are minimised as far as possible and any complaints that are received are dealt with as cost effectively as possible.
Risk Implications	The risk to the Council in not having in place a robust local standards regime could damage its reputation for good governance and undermine public confidence in the Council as a whole.
Monitoring Officer	This is a report prepared by the Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services) in his capacity as Monitoring Officer.
Consultees:	Appointment Panel Consisting of Mark Brookes, Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services), Farida Hussain, Group Manager (Legal and Corporate Services) and Councillor David Collins, Portfolio Holder (Corporate and Contracted Services).
Background papers:	None

BACKGROUND REPORT

1. The Localism Act requires the Council to appoint an 'Independent Person' whose views have to be sought, and taken into account, before the Council decides what action should be taken against a member who has been found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct.
2. The Standards Committee also appoints two Independent Members (with no voting rights) who are members of the public and advise the Standards Committee on any complaints which come before it for determination.
3. In accordance with the Localism Act, the role of Independent Person was advertised and three applications were received before the closing date. The advert was open and allowed applicants to apply for both the Independent Person and Independent Members roles. On 18th and 23rd April the three candidates were interviewed by a panel consisting of Councillor David Collins, Farida Hussain, Group Manager (Legal and Corporate Services) and the Monitoring Officer.
4. After carefully evaluating the respective experience and knowledge of the three candidates, the panel decided to recommend to Council that Susan Johnson be appointed to the role of Independent Person for a term of four years and Caroline Guest and Gloria Gillespie be appointed as Independent Members for terms of four years.

5. Susan Johnson lives in Berkhamsted and has worked in local government all of her working life starting in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and then the Greater London Council. Mrs Johnson was also the clerk to Tring Town Council from 1989 until her retirement in 2010. She has also assisted on a temporary consultancy basis both Tring and Berkhamsted Town Council between 2012 and 2016.
6. Gloria Gillespie lives in Kings Langley and worked in local government as a Senior Environmental Health Manager at Three Rivers District Council before her recent retirement
7. Caroline Guest lives in Hemel Hempstead and currently works as a Civil Enforcement Officer issuing fines for traffic offences in Dacorum. Her previous work experience includes working as a hotelier and publican.
8. All three candidates demonstrated their independence and commitment to upholding standards across the borough and are therefore recommended for appointment.