



AGENDA ITEM:

SUMMARY

Report for:	Council
Date of meeting:	22 September 2016
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	STANDARDS COMMITTEE – LOCALISM ACT 2011 RE-APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON
Contact:	Mark Brookes, Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer Directline: 01442 228236 ext: 2236 Email: mark.brookes@dacorum.gov.uk
Purpose of report:	To seek the approval of Council to the re-appointment of the Independent Person.
Recommendations	That Council: Re-appoints Rachel Keil as the Council's Independent Person until Annual Council held in 2019.
Corporate Objectives:	The promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by Members of the Council will assist the Council in achieving its priorities of performance excellence, reputation and delivering an efficient and modern Council. The Committee will also ensure that Members are accountable to the public for their actions and ensure that Members work within, and comply with the Code of Conduct for Members.
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/S.151 Officer Comments	This is a report prepared by the Solicitor to the Council in his capacity as Monitoring Officer.
Consultees:	Standards Committee
Background papers:	Localism Act 2011

Background

Independent Person:

1. The Council is required under the Localism Act 2011 (“the Act”) 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 or co-opted member who has been found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct. Rachel Keil has been appointed the Council’s Independent Person since November 2012 and the current term of office expires on 20 November 2016.
2. The Act does not prescribe a time limit on the term of office of the Independent Person and this is therefore within the discretion of the Council. The Council can either carry out another recruitment process for a new Independent Person or it can re-appoint Mrs. Keil for a further term. Mrs. Keil has performed the role of Independent Person diligently and it is therefore proposed to re-appoint her until Annual Council in 2019 rather than commence another recruitment process. This term of office will also coincide with the current term of office for the co-opted Independent Members and therefore recruitment for both roles can be carried out at the same time.
3. The Standards Committee has been consulted on this recommendation and has recommended the re-appointment of Rachel Keil to Council. Mrs Keil has also confirmed that she is happy to continue in the role.