

Recommendations to the Council

12 October 2017

(a) Appointment of Independent Persons under Localism Act 2011

1. The County Council's Code of Conduct for members was introduced in 2012 in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. That Code requires the involvement of Independent Persons in considering alleged breaches of the Code. An Independent Person has to be consulted by the Monitoring Officer at various stages of the complaint handling process. Separately, if the complaint is pursued, the member complained about has the right to seek the views of an Independent Person.

2. Recently, legislative changes to the Employment Rules for the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer require Independent Persons to be included in the membership of a special committee which has to make recommendations to Council on any disciplinary action against the holders of those posts.

3. For some time the County Council has had two Independent Persons whose service and commitment has been, and continues to be, greatly valued and appreciated. However the changes referred to in paragraph 2 above mean that a wider 'pool' of Independent Persons is advisable. To address this the Audit and Standards Committee have recently carried out a recruitment exercise which resulted in five suitable applicants. Interviews were held by a Special Panel of the Audit and Standards Committee and two candidates are now recommended to Council for appointment:

- Mr Tom Roach (A retired HR professional with experience in the education sector and in the private sector - UK and Europe)
- Mrs Christina Robotham (A retired Staffordshire Headteacher)

(b) Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) Members

4. The County Council is required to have an Independent Remuneration Panel comprising 3-5 members to consider and make recommendations to Council on a Members' Allowances Scheme. To date the County Council has sought to have Panels of five members however recently four vacancies have arisen due to varying circumstances. The Audit and Standards Committee therefore ran a recruitment campaign to co-incide with that for the Independent Persons listed above. Five suitable candidates were interviewed by a Special Panel with the following two recommended to Council for appointment:

- Mr Tom Roach (see above)
- Mrs Christina Robotham (see above).

NB there are no Regulations precluding a person from carrying out more than one Independent role. The Special Panel felt that the wide variety of skills and knowledge held by Mr Roach and Mrs Robotham would be advantageous to both roles.

It is important that the IRP progresses its work on the Allowances Scheme for 2017/18 therefore it is recommended that it proceed on the basis of 3 members with a further recruitment drive next year.

5. Recommended:

- (i)** That Mr Tom Roach and Mrs Christina Robotham be appointed as Independent Persons as required under the Localism Act 2011 and as members of the Independent Remuneration Panel, both appointments to be for a four year period.
- (ii)** That the Audit and Standards Committee be requested to carry out a further recruitment exercise for IRP members in 2018