

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Warning: This item deals with potentially exempt information although this report is open.

REPORT TO: Council 22 November 2001
AUTHOR/S: Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer

STANDARDS COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

Introduction

1. The purpose of this report is to bring to Council a recommendation for the appointment of two independent members of the Standards Committee to complete the membership of the Committee in accordance with the Constitution and to make provision for allowances.

Background

2. The four District Council members chose from 16 applicants nominated by various Parish Councils, Mr Denis Payne and Mrs Grace Everson as the two parish members of the Standards Committee. The six are due to meet on the 19th November to consider in response to public advertisement seven applications for appointment as independent members of the Standards Committee. They will be recommending two names for confirmation by Full Council. The original Constitution required a three quarters majority for confirmation but this was changed at the last meeting to provide for simple majority confirmation. The Council also clarified the term of office of the District Council members as four years.
3. The identity of the two independent members recommended by the Appointments Panel will be communicated to Full Council at the meeting together with details of their experience, background and other information available. Full Council will be asked to confirm that recommendation.

Allowances

4. The District Councillors will be entitled to the usual Councillors' allowances including travel and subsistence. The membership of the Standards Committee includes Parish and independent members who are not, under the Constitution, presently within the ambit of those allowances. They are nevertheless full members of that Committee and should be considered for appropriate allowances in line with that degree of responsibility. It is suggested that Council approves extending the availability of travel and subsistence allowances to Parish and independent members at the same rate as District Councillors'. It is also suggested that the Parish and independent members should be entitled to a basic or ordinary allowance at a rate to be settled by Full Council based perhaps on a percentage of the District Councillors' basic allowance. It is anticipated that the Standards Committee will be meeting four times in its first year and between two and four times a year thereafter. The Chairman of the Standards Committee has already been voted a special responsibility allowance

and this will apply whether the Chairman is a District Councillor or a parish member or an independent member.

Financial Implications

5. There will be consequent cost to the Council of any approved basic allowance and travel and subsistence costs for Parish and independent members, but these are likely to be modest.

Legal Implications

6. None, saving only that the next review of the Constitution will include the appropriate references to approved allowances for Parish and independent members.

Contact Officer Chris Taylor, Monitoring Officer

Background papers: the Constitution, Applications file (confidential)