

REPORT TO: Council

14 July 2020

LEAD OFFICER: Interim Corporate Director

Appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel and ratification of appointment of Independent and Deputy Independent Persons.

Executive Summary

1. To invite Council to re-appoint Graham Jagger to the Independent Remuneration Panel and to ratify the re-appointment of both Grant Osbourn and Gillian Holmes to the positions respectively of Independent Person and Deputy Independent Person.

Key Decision

2. No.

Recommendations

3. That Council re-appoints Graham Jagger as a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel for a term of office expiring 30 September 2022.
4. That the Council ratifies the re-appointment of Grant Osbourn as the Council's Independent Person for a further year.
5. That the Council ratifies the re-appointment of Gillian Holmes as the Council's Deputy Independent Person for a further year.

Reasons for Recommendations

6. Graham Jagger has been the Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel since July 2011 and so has a wealth of experience. His re-appointment provides for continuity on the panel.
7. Grant Osbourn and Gillian Holmes were re-appointed by the Council on 16 May 2019 as the Council's Independent and Deputy Independent Persons , subject to annual ratification.

Details

8. Local authorities are required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). The purpose of this Panel is to make recommendations to the Authority about the allowances to be paid to Members. IRPs make recommendations about the level of basic allowance for Members; the level of Special Responsibility Allowances and to whom they should be paid and on whether dependants' carers' allowance, travel and subsistence allowances and co-optees' allowances should be paid and the level of those allowances. The IRP shall comprise at least three members. Council is invited to re-appoint Graham Jagger as a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel for a further term of office. Mr Jagger's term of office formally expired in September 2019 and his earlier reappointment was an oversight on the part of officers.
9. The Council must comply with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, which places a statutory duty upon the Council to appoint at least one independent person whose:
 - a. views must be sought and taken into account by the Authority before it makes a finding that any member has failed to comply with its Code of Conduct or imposes any sanction;
 - b. views may be sought on whether to investigate a complaint and how to deal with a particular allegation;
 - c. in addition, any member against whom an allegation has been made (including a Parish Councillor) may consult him or her regarding the allegation.
10. It has been the policy of the Council to appoint a Deputy Independent Person, to fulfil the role of the Independent Person should that postholder be unavailable or have a conflict of interest. The Committee on Standards in Public Life published a report in January 2019 entitled "Local Government Ethical Standards: A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life", which recommended that Council's appoint at least two Independent Persons, in their list of recommendations of Best Practice on page 18 of their report..
11. Council at its annual meeting on 16 May 2019 agreed to re-appoint Grant Osbourn, as the Council's Lead Independent Person, and Gillian Holmes, as the Council's Deputy Independent Person, for a further two years, subject to annual ratification. Ordinarily these appointments would have been ratified at the annual Council meeting but because of the coronavirus pandemic, the Council agreed to postpone the annual meeting. Under the relevant regulations, all existing appointments continue until the next annual meeting or until the Council determines otherwise. However, for completeness, and as the Council has previously specified that the appointments of Independent Persons should be subject to annual ratification, the Council is asked to endorse these re-appointments for a further year.

Options

12. To either confirm or not approve the re-appointment of Graham Jagger as a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel. To either confirm or not approve the re-appointment of Graham Osbourn as the Council's Independent Member and the re-appointment of Gillian Holmes as the Council's Deputy Independent Member.

Implications

13. There are no significant implications, although the Independent Person receives an allowance of £1,060 and the Deputy Independent Person an allowance of £530. Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel may receive a sum of up to £200 per annum to cover their expenses

Background Papers

None

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