

# APPLICATION PACK FOR INDEPENDENT PERSON



**South  
Cambridgeshire  
District Council**

## **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON – BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Under the Localism Act 2011 the way that South Cambridgeshire District Council (and other authorities) deal with complaints about its District, Town and Parish Councillors' conduct has changed.

The District Council is responsible for deciding how to deal with standards issues at a local level and has adopted arrangements for dealing with District and Parish Council complaints.

The Act provides that the Council must appoint an Independent Person to assist in discharging these responsibilities. Full details of the role and responsibilities of the Independent Person are included below.

The Independent Person may be consulted on a complaint by the Council to seek views and whether to reject or undertake other action on the complaint and must seek the views and take these into account before it makes a decision on an investigated complaint. The Independent Person may be consulted on other standards matters, including by the Council who is subject to an allegation.

For this reason, the Council will be seeking to recruit one lead Independent Person (who will normally be contacted by the Council) and a deputy Independent Person, (who will be contacted if the lead is unable to act, due to absence or other reason). This latter situation may occur if the lead believes for any reason that they have a conflict relating to the complaint, or will absent due to illness or leave.

The appointment of the lead and deputy Independent Person will be made at the full Council meeting on **23 May 2013**. Any offer of the position is therefore subject to that approval process. The appointment will take effect from 1 July 2013 and will be for a period of three years subject to an annual ratification by Full Council at its Annual General Meeting.

A fixed allowance of £1000 per annum is payable to the lead Independent Person together with reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses. A fixed allowance of £500 per annum is payable to the deputy Independent Person together with reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses. Training shall be provided to any successful applicant.

## INDEPENDENT PERSON

## SELECTION CRITERIA

### SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

The Independent Person will have:

- a keen interest in standards in public life.
- a wish to serve the local community and uphold local democracy.
- the ability to be objective, independent and impartial.
- sound decision making skills.
- leadership qualities, particularly in respect of exercising sound judgement.

The Independent Person will:

- be a person in whose impartiality and integrity the public can have confidence.
- understand and comply with confidentiality requirements.
- have a demonstrable interest in local issues.
- have an awareness of the importance of ethical behaviours.
- be a good communicator.

Desirable additional criteria are:

- working knowledge/experience of local government or other public service and/or of large complex organisations and awareness of and sensitivity to the political process.
- knowledge, past experience and understanding of judicial/quasi, judicial or complaints processes.

You should demonstrate in your application how you meet the above criteria as this will assist the short-listing process.

Means of assessment will be by application form and by interview.

NOTE: You will be required to be contactable at all times during normal working hours by telephone or by email and to be available to attending hearings which may be held in the day time. You will normally be given a few months notice of any hearings, but the notice period may be at relatively short notice, if, for example, a hearing has been adjourned for any reason and your attendance is required.

### Eligibility for Appointment

A person cannot be appointed as an Independent Person if they are or were within a period of 5 years prior to the appointment:

- A Councillor, co-opted Councillor or Officer of the Council
- A Councillor, co-opted Councillor or Officer of a Town or Parish Council in the District Council's area, or
- A relative or close friend of either of the above.

You can check the lists of elected Councillors on the Council's website at:

<http://scams.moderngov.co.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1>

You can check details of the District's Parish Councils on the Council's website at <http://scams.moderngov.co.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?PC=1> and details of individual parish councillors can be found on individual parish websites.

## **ROLE OF INDEPENDENT PERSON**

**(as adopted by the Cambridgeshire Councils and the Cambridgeshire Fire Authority)**

### **ROLE DESCRIPTION**

Responsible to: The Council

Liaison with: Monitoring Officer, Deputy Monitoring Officer, Members of the Civic Affairs Committee (which administers the standards complaints system), officers and Councillors of the District Council and Parish Councillors within the District, key stakeholders within the community.

1. To assist the Council in promoting high standards of conduct amongst elected and co-opted District and Parish Councillors and in particular to ensure that these Councillors uphold the Code of Conduct adopted by the District and Parish Council, and the seven principles of public office, namely, selflessness, honesty, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness and leadership.
2. Shall be consulted by the Council through the Monitoring Officer or the Deputy Monitoring Officer before he/she makes a decision on whether to reject a complaint or to refer the matter for investigation or other action.
3. To be consulted by the panel members of the Civic Affairs Committee before it makes a decision on an investigated allegation and to be available to attend meetings of the Hearing Panel for this purpose.
4. To be available for consultation by any elected Councillor, including Parish Councillors, who is the subject of a standards complaint.
5. To develop a sound understanding of the ethical framework as it operates within the District, including the Parish Councils within the District.
6. To participate in training events to develop skills, knowledge and experience and in networks developed for Independent Persons operating outside the District Council's area.
7. To attend training events organised and promoted by the Council.
8. To act as advocate and ambassador for the Council in promoting ethical behaviour.

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**APPLICATION FOR THE POSITION OF INDEPENDENT PERSON**

Individuals who wish to be considered for appointment as Independent Person are requested to complete and submit the following application form. All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be used for the purposes of selection. Please feel free to use a separate continuation page if you wish to expand upon your answer to any question outlined below.

**1. PERSONAL DETAILS**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Postcode:**

**National Insurance Number:**

**Contact Details:**

**Daytime Telephone Number:**

**Mobile Telephone Number:**

**Email Address:**

**2. QUALIFICATIONS**

(Please list in particular any qualifications which you think are relevant to the position of Independent Person)

**3. SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE**

(Please give a brief account of your experience including career, public and voluntary work together with the nature of your current or most recent occupation)

**4. RELEVANT EXPERTISE/SKILLS**

(Please outline briefly any knowledge or expertise which you believe would be particularly relevant to your role as an Independent Person having regard to the selection criteria and role description)

**5. Why do you wish to be considered for appointment as Independent Person and what particular attributes do you believe you would bring to the role?**

**6. Please provide any additional information you may wish to give in support of your application:**

7. **References will be taken up for all applicants who are invited for interview:**

1 Name: .....	2 Name: .....
Address: .....	Address: .....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
Telephone No .....	Telephone No .....

8. **Please indicate below if you are happy to be considered for both the lead and deputy roles:**

- Lead Independent Person [YES/NO]
- Deputy Independent Person [YES/NO]

**DECLARATION**

I wish to apply to be an Independent Person. In submitting this application I declare that:  
EITHER

- I am not and have not **during the past five years** been a Councillor or Officer of the District Council (subject to\* & tick if this applies)
- I am not related to, or a close friend of, any Councillor or Officer of the District Council.
- I am not and have not **during the past five years** been a Councillor or Officer of the Parish Council within the South Cambridgeshire District.
- I am not actively engaged in local party political activity.\*
  
- \*I am an existing independent member of the Standards Committee.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this application form by ..... addressed to:

**Fiona McMillan, Monitoring Officer  
South Cambridgeshire District Council  
South Cambridgeshire Hall  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne  
Cambridge  
CB23 6EA**