

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**12TH JUNE 2008**

**APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS**

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Smith
Responsible Head of Service	Claire Felton, Monitoring Officer

**1. SUMMARY**

The Local Government Act 2000 requires at least 25% of the Standards Committee to be made up of Independent Members. No clear policy has been adopted by the Council as to how vacancies for Independent Members should be advertised or the selection criteria which should be applied. Members are requested to give consideration to these issues and make recommendations to Council as appropriate.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

Members are requested to decide on how vacancies for Independent Members of the Standards Committee should be advertised, the information which should be provided to prospective candidates and the selection criteria to be applied and to make recommendations to Council accordingly.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Local Government Act 2000 as amended and regulations made thereunder require the composition of Standards Committees to include at least 25% independent members. The term of office of each independent member is 4 years. Vacancies for the role of Independent Members on the Standards Committee arise from time to time.
- 3.2 In view of the changes to the way complaints are assessed and the new requirements for committees and sub-committees to be chaired by independent members, it is considered appropriate to revisit the process by which independent members are co-opted. In particular, advice is sought from members as to how much and what information candidates should be provided with and whether any particular skills should be sought.
- 3.3 The latest Standards Board for England guidance on Independent Members is attached as Appendix 1 and the model recruitment pack referred to in that guidance is attached as Appendix 2; the document in this pack have been used by this Council in the past in recruiting Independent Members for the Standards Committee.

- 3.4 Members are requested to consider these documents and to decide on the extent to which they should be revised to reflect the requirements and objectives of this Standards Committee.

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Sections 53 – 56 of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended introduced the requirement for an authority to have a Standards Committee and the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008 set out the detailed requirements for the composition of Standards Committees and the requirements for independent members.

6. **COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

This report does not directly link with any of the Council's objectives.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

- Failure to comply with the ethical governance framework may expose Council decisions to the risk of challenge and loss of reputation,

- 7.2 This risk is being managed as follows:

- Risk Register: Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
- Key Objective Ref No: 3
- Key Objective: Effective ethical governance

8. **CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

The role of the independent members is important in ensuring public confidence in the ethical standards regime.

9. **EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

None.

10. **VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

None.

## 11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues	None
Personnel Implications	None
Governance/Performance Management	None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998	None
Policy	None
Environmental	None

## 12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	No
Executive Director - Services	No
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

## 13. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards.

## 14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Guidance from SBE on independent members

Appendix 2

ACSeS recruitment pack for independent members

**15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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