

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL



STANDARDS COMMITTEE **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER**

The Council is required to have a Standards Committee to oversee the standards and ethics of elected, co-opted and independent members including Town and Parish Councillors within the district's area. Meetings are usually held during the day and take place at the District Council's offices at Kelham Hall. The Committee's role includes local determination of standards investigations as well as advising and raising awareness on issues relating to ethics and conduct.

If you are interested in playing a key role in enhancing local democracy and maintaining and enhancing standards and ethics in Newark and Sherwood, you are invited to apply for the position as an independent member of the Standards Committee. The Committee currently comprises eight members in total of which two are independent and two represent Parish Councils within the district with the remaining four members being elected Members of Newark and Sherwood District Council.

To be eligible to apply you should not: -

- Have been a Member or Officer at Newark and Sherwood District Council or of a Parish or Town Council within the district within the last five years
- Be a relative or close friend of a Member or Officer at Newark and Sherwood District Council.

Ideally, you should have: -

- A keen interest in standards in public life
- A wish to serve the local community and uphold local democracy
- Demonstrate high standards of personal integrity
- Be objective, independent and impartial
- Have direct experience of implementing and upholding standards and/or dealing with complaints and customer care issues.

A small fixed annual allowance is payable together with travel and subsistence expenses. Preference will be given to applicants who are resident within the district of Newark and Sherwood.

For an information pack, please visit the Council's Website www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk or contact: -

Nigel Hill
Democratic Services Manager
Newark and Sherwood District Council
Kelham Hall
Newark
Notts
NG23 5QX
Tel: 01636 655243
E-mail: nigel.hill@nsdc.info

The closing date for applications is 24th February 2006
Interviews will be held on Wednesday 22nd March 2006

ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Council is required by law to establish a Standards Committee. The role and responsibilities of the Standards Committee is set out below: -

1. Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority
2. Assisting members and co-opted members of the authority to observe the authority's Code of Conduct
3. Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct
4. Monitoring and advising the Council on the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct
5. Advising, training or arranging to train members and co-opted members of the authority on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct
6. Granting dispensations to Councillors and co-opted members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct
7. Dealing with any reports from the Monitoring Officer or an Investigating Officer on behalf of the Monitoring Officer and dealing with any reports referred by an Ethical Standards Officer for local determination
8. Exercising all of the above functions in respect of Parish Councils within the district and members of those Parish Councils
9. To investigate and consider alleged breaches by Members of Newark and Sherwood District Council of the Financial Regulations adopted from time to time by the Council
10. To deal with unresolved issues arising under the Member/Officer protocol referred by the Leader and/or Chief Executive.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF HOLDING PUBLIC OFFICE
(THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES (GENERAL PRINCIPLES) ORDER 2001)

The ten general principles (set out below) form the basis of the Members' Code of Conduct.

Selflessness

1. Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity

2. Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity

3. Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

4. Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness

5. Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal Judgement

6. Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

7. Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers and its other employees.

Duty to Uphold the Law

8. Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship

9. Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

10. Members should promote and support these principles by leadership and by example and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL



**APPLICATION FOR THE POSITION OF
INDEPENDENT MEMBER
OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Individuals who wish to be considered for the appointment as an Independent Member of the Standards Committee of Newark and Sherwood District Council are requested to provide the following information to support their application. All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be used for the purposes of selecting committee members. 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:

Date of Birth:

National Insurance Number:

Contact details:

Daytime Telephone Number:

Daytime Fax Number

E-mail Address:

2. QUALIFICATIONS

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

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 Member of the Standards Committee having regard to the selection criteria for the position)

5. Why do you wish to be considered for membership of the Standards Committee and what particular attributes do you believe you would bring to the work of the Committee?

6. Any additional information you may wish to give to support 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.

I wish to apply to be an Independent Member of the Newark and Sherwood District Council Standards Committee.

In submitting this application, I declare that: -

- I am not and have not during the past five years been a Member or Officer of Newark and Sherwood District Council or of any Town or Parish Council within the district's area
- I am not related to, or a close friend of, any Member or Officer of Newark and Sherwood District Council.
- I am not actively engaged in local party political activity.

Signed

Date

Please return this application form in the envelope provided by **Friday 24th February 2006** addressed to:

Kirsty Cole
Monitoring Officer
Newark and Sherwood District Council
Kelham Hall
Newark
Notts
NG23 5QX

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Selection Criteria

The ideal candidate for the position of independent member of the Standards Committee will have:-

1. A broad range of experience, preferably in public, private, voluntary or charitable sector employment or service including self-employed, employed and voluntary positions.
2. Good analytical skills and be able to demonstrate clarity of thought. The ability to assimilate information quickly and arrive at balanced judgments.
3. Independence of mind, objectivity and impartiality.
4. A high level of personal integrity.
5. A commitment to the general principles governing the conduct of Councilors generally and matters of probity and integrity in particular.
6. Good interpersonal skills, including good communication skills both written and oral and the ability to co-operate with others in a committee setting. Tact and diplomacy in handling sensitive matters.

Desirable additional criteria are: -

1. Experience of dealing with matters of the kind which will be the concern of the Standards Committee in other contexts.
2. Working knowledge / experience of local government or some other aspects of the public service and/or of large, complex organisations at a senior level and substantial awareness and understanding of the political process
3. Knowledge/ experience of procedures for meetings
4. A preference will be given to applications from residents within the district of Newark and Sherwood.

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 assessment of application form and by interview.

NOTE:

1. Meetings will normally be held in the daytime but occasionally be held in the early evening and/or at short notice. The successful appointee will therefore need to be flexible in being able to attend such meetings on occasion at short notice.

NOTE: ELIGIBILITY FOR APPOINTMENT

2. A person who has: -

- within the last five years been a Member or Officer of Newark and Sherwood District Council or of any Town or Parish Council within the district
- or who is a relative or close friend of a Member or Officer of the Council

is not eligible to be an independent member of the Standards Committee and should not apply.

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Responsible to: The Standards Committee and to the Council

Liaison with: Members of the Standards Committee, Officers and Members of the District Council and of Town and Parish Councils within the District, Independent Members of the other Standards Committees, key stakeholders within the community.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To attend meetings of the Standards Committee and any sub-committees as and when required (NOTE: meetings will normally be held during the daytime but maybe held during the early evening and may occasionally be called at short notice).
2. To actively promote ethics and standards within Newark and Sherwood District Council and within Town and Parish Councils within the District area.
3. To participate in training events to promote awareness of the Code of Conduct.
4. To attend meetings of the District Council and Civic and other functions in order to raise the profile of ethics and standards within the authority.
5. In the absence of the Chairman, to participate in any forum established for independent members of the Standards Committee.

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL
INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

NOTES ON ELIGIBILITY

By regulations: -

a person may not be appointed as an independent member of a Standards Committee of an authority or sub-committee of the Standards Committee unless the appointment is: -

- (a) approved by a majority of the Members of the authority;
- (b) advertised in one or more newspapers circulating in the area of the authority;
- (c) of a person who has submitted an application to the authority;
- (d) of a person who has not within the period of five years immediately preceding the date of the appointment been a Member or Officer of the authority and;
- (e) of a person who is not a relative or close friend of a Member or Officer of the authority.

[The Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) Regulations 2001: Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2812]

By primary legislation: -

A person may not be appointed as an independent member of a Standards Committee if he/she is currently an Officer or Member of any relevant authority (including Town, Parish or District Councils).

[The Local Government Act 2000 Section 53 (4) (b)]