

REPORT TO:	Standards Committee
REPORT NO:	COGC/22/19
DATE:	6 June 2019
LEAD OFFICER:	Deputy Monitoring Officer
CONTACT OFFICER:	Linda Roberts, Head of Service, Legal, Democratic & Registration/Deputy Monitoring Officer (Tel: 292221)
SUBJECT:	Recruitment of Independent Member
WARD:	N/A

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To consider amending the recently agreed process for the recruitment of an independent member on the Standards Committee following a recent resignation from the Committee.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 In March 2019, Members approved the recruitment process and specific membership of the Selection Panel as the second term for one of the independent members of the Standards Committee, Mr Michael Pugh, expires later this year in September 2019. Since that Meeting, the Chief Officer Governance & Customer has received notification that that one of the other independent members, Mrs Claire Blanchard wishes to resign from the Committee.
- 2.2 The Council have to follow a statutory procedure for the recruitment of independent members, as required by the Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended), and it will be necessary for the Council to embark on this prescribed process during the summer of 2019. This would involve advertising the two positions in two local newspapers, following which the Selection Panel established by the Council in September 2005 would interview all suitable applicants and subsequently the Panel's recommendation regarding the two appointments would be considered by the Council.
- 2.3 The specific membership of the Selection Panel for the current recruitment process was agreed by the Committee in March and comprises of the following:

Mr Graham Binnie, Lay Panel Member
Community Councillor Geoff Edwards
Independent member, Ms Julie Adams
Independent member, Mrs Sandra Hunt
Councillor I David Bithell, MBE

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the report be noted and the recruitment process, as agreed by the Committee in March 2019, be amended to include recruitment for two independent members.**

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To ensure the Standards Committee is constituted in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 The second consecutive term of office of one of the independent members of the Standards Committee, Mr Michael Pugh, expires later this year in September 2019 and in accordance with the Standards Committee (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 an independent member of a Standards Committee may only serve two consecutive terms of office.
- 4.2 On 7 May 2019, the Chief Officer Governance & Customer received notification that Mrs Claire Blanchard wishes to resign from the Committee.
- 4.3 The Council will therefore have to follow the statutory procedure for recruitment of two new independent members as required by the Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended).
- 4.4 The Regulations require the Council to advertise for the appointment of independent members in two local newspapers and to establish a selection Panel to consider applications received. The specific membership of the Selection Panel for the current recruitment process was agreed by the Committee in March and comprises of the following:
- Mr Graham Binnie, Lay Panel Member
Community Councillor Geoff Edwards
Independent member, Ms Julie Adams
Independent member, Mrs Sandra Hunt
Councillor I David Bithell, MBE
- 4.5 The Council requires Members to have undergone interview training prior to sitting on the Selection Panel.
- 4.6 The law requires that neither a current Officer nor Member, nor the spouse of an Officer or Member, of a local authority, may be an independent member of a Standards Committee. However, former Officers and Members of local authorities other than Wrexham are eligible provided that at least one year has

expired after they cease to be an Officer/Member. Criteria over and above the statutory criteria for the appointment of independent members were agreed by the Council in 2001 and include a prohibition on political party activity or having had significant previous dealings with the Council or a close relationship with any Member or Officer of the Council. The Selection Panel must consider these criteria when considering appointments for the vacancy, and make recommendations to the Council for appointment.

4.7 The agreed timetable for the recruitment process is as follows:

- (a) Panel training 6 June 2019 – immediately prior to Committee meeting.
- (b) June 2019 – Advertise vacancies.
- (c) Mid/Late July 2019 – Interviews take place.
- (d) September 2019 – Recommendation to the Council for appointment.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 **Policy Framework** - Part 2 Article 9 of the Council's Constitution states the composition of the Standards Committee and terms of office for independent members.

5.2 **Budget** – The costs of advertising will need to be met from within existing budgets.

5.3 **Legal** - There are no specific implications.

5.4 **Staffing** - There are no specific implications.

5.5 **Equalities/Human Rights** - There are no specific equality and human rights issues arising from this report. Any impacts will be considered as part of EIA CCS/EIA00080/2015 - Committee Administrative Processes.

5.6 **Risks** - Not applicable

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Not applicable

BACKGROUND PAPERS	LOCATION	WEBSITE INFO.
Local Government Act 2000 Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended).		