

**REPORT FOR: SELECTION PANEL
(NON-EXECUTIVE)**

Date: 21 January 2010

Subject: Appointment of Independent Members to the Standards Committee

Responsible Officer: Hugh Peart, Director of Legal and Governance Services

Exempt: No

Enclosures: Appendix – Draft Application Pack for Prospective Candidates

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

In accordance with statutory requirements, the Council is required to make arrangements for the appointment of new Independent Members from May 2010. This report sets out the draft application pack for the recruitment of these independent members and suggestions on where the advert should be placed.

Recommendations:

The Panel is requested to

- (1) Consider and approve the application pack;
- (2) Consider and agree where advertisements for the recruitment of independent members should be placed.

Section 2 – Report

Background

1. Section 53 of the Local Government Act 2000 requires every Council to establish a Standards Committee. The size and composition of the Standards Committee and the appointment of independent members is governed by The Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008. At least 25% of the members of a Standards Committee must be Independent Members, and the Chairman of the Standards Committee must always be an Independent Member.
2. The Regulations state that a person may not be appointed as an Independent Member 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, and in such other publications or websites as the authority considers appropriate;
 - (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.
3. Full Council at its meeting on 27 October 2009 approved the formation of this Selection Panel to deal with the process of recruiting the independent Members of the Standards Committee from May 2010.
4. Full Council also resolved that four Independent Members be appointed to serve on the Standards Committee for four years from May 2010, and one reserve Independent Member be appointed to act:
 - (a) in the event that any serving Independent Member resigns or is unable to continue before the expiry of their term of office;
 - (b) as and when appointed by Council.

Process

5. It is envisaged that, dependent on the number of applicants, the Selection Panel may only be required to meet on 3 occasions (including this meeting) to carry out the following:
 - (i) agree a job description and person specification, information pack and shortlisting criteria; and agree the advert, where the advert should be placed and arrangements for the circulation of the advert to stakeholders;
 - (ii) carry out a shortlisting exercise from the applications received; and
 - (iii) interview shortlisted applicants with the Monitoring Officer or his representative and an HR advisor, prior to recommending appointment to the Standards Committee.
6. It is envisaged that the advertisement process would commence by the end of January 2010 through February. It is proposed that the deadline for receipt of applications at the end of February 2010.
7. Following the shortlisting and interviewing, the Selection Panel's recommendations would then be reported to the Standards Committee on 23 March 2009, for onward recommendation to and adoption by Council at the beginning of the 2010/11 Municipal Year.

Application Pack

8. A proposed draft application pack is enclosed as an appendix to this report. This application pack has been prepared by studying other examples provided by other London Authorities such as Southwark, Lambeth and Croydon.
9. The Application Pack comprises of a front page summary with further information then being provided on the background of the Council, the purpose of the role and various other miscellaneous information.
10. The Application Pack also comprises of a Job Description and Person Specification.

Advertisements

11. Regulations state that the advertisement for the recruitment of independent members must be contained in one or more newspapers circulating in the area of the authority, and in such other publications or websites as the authority considers appropriate.

12. In light of this and to ensure maximum exposure to all community, faith and other groups, officers propose that the advertisements be published in the following (all to take place during February 2010):

Harrow Times

Harrow Council Website

Harrow People

Jobs Go Public Website

Letter to all Community / Faith Groups in the Borough (to be sent out by the Policy and Partnerships Team).

Asian Voice Newspaper

13. Members are requested to consider the above proposals and requested to advise of other suggestions they may have.

Financial Implications

14. The advertising costs of recruiting Independent Members will be contained within existing budgets.

Risk Management Implications

15. Not agreeing to a formal application pack and advertisement process could result in not attracting the best possible candidates and / or a breach of the regulations.

Corporate Priorities

16. The recruitment of independent members to the Standards Committee promotes the Council's Corporate Priority of building stronger communities by encouraging all members of the community to apply to become an independent member of the Standards Committee and play an important role in the integrity, transparency and accountability of the Council.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Steve Tingle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 7 January 2010		
Name: George Curran	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date: 4 January 2010		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Vishal Seegoolam, Acting Senior Professional – Democratic Services, 020 8424 1883

Background Papers:

Application Packs from Lambeth, Southwark and Croydon.

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	NO
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES