

## Standards Committee

### AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE - INDEPENDENT MEMBER RECRUITMENT</b>
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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	17 December 2007
<b>Directorate:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Ward(s)</b>	ALL

### 1. Summary

1.1 The report details the outcome of recent attempts to recruit three Independent Members for Standards Committee and recommends a revised format for future recruitment.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 That the 6 candidates be interviewed.

2.2 That any future recruitment campaign takes into account the lack of interest showed in earlier recruitment by underrepresented community groups and positively addresses this issue.

2.3 That one candidate already interviewed as part of the process is automatically placed in the pool for the next round of interviews.

### 3. Report Background

3.1 The Council undertook a recruitment exercise for 3 independent members last year. 3 candidates were shortlisted, one (the current chair) was appointed immediately and the other 2 were placed in the 'pool', pending a further recruitment exercise to seek candidates that were more representative of the diverse community the council serves. Of the two remaining candidates one has withdrawn and the other automatically goes into the next round.

3.1 Following Standards Committee of 18<sup>th</sup> September 2007, when the committee considered the difficulty in recruiting independent members, the Monitoring Officer wrote to over 200 members of the Council's Neighbourhood Partnership and Forum groups.

3.2 Of the 200 invitations to apply sent out 31 expressions of interest were received but only 5 applications have been received.

3.3 The responses were representative but not statistically significant in terms of the diversity of our community. This is a recurring issue in this process and was highlighted to committee by the Solicitor to the Council on 18<sup>th</sup> September.

- 3.4 In light of the current need to appoint two Independent Members to the committee the Solicitor to the Council recommends that subject to suitability two appointments be made from the 6 candidates who have applied.
- 3.5 Following the enactment of the Local government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 there will be a need for the capacity of the Standards Committee to be reconsidered. Therefore, it is recommended that all candidates thought suitable are either appointed or kept in a 'pool' for future appointment should the number of members on Standards Committee be increased.

#### **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

- 4.1 As one third of the membership of Standards Committee must, under the Council's constitution, be Independent Members the difficulty in recruiting to the role presents a significant risk to Standards Committee and the Council to the extent that the committee might be unable to function effectively due to insufficient Independent Membership. This risk can be mitigated by a focused campaign amongst underrepresented groups.
- 4.2 Continued vacancies amongst Independent Members may reduce public confidence in Standards Committee.

#### 4.3 Legal.

None specifically related to this report

#### 4.4 Other Implications. None

None

#### **5. Background Papers**

Advert and applications records held by Solicitor to the Council.

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