

Council

21 September 2017

Appointment of Independent Persons

Recommendation

That the Council confirms the appointment of Ms Mumtaz Goolam as an Independent Person for Warwickshire County Council under the Localism Act 2011

1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 Under the Localism Act 2011, local authorities must put in place arrangements to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst its councillors and co-opted members. As part of those arrangements the Council must appoint independent persons.
- 1.2 An Independent Person is not a member of any committee but the Council must seek his or her views, and take them into account, before taking a decision on an allegation that the Council has decided to investigate under the Member Code of Conduct. The views of an Independent Persons can also be sought by a member under investigation.
- 1.3 The County Council has combined forces with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council and Rugby Borough Council to create a joint panel where Independent Persons may act for more than one authority. The incidence of complaints requiring investigation is very variable and single authority arrangements often fail to provide the necessary opportunities to enable Independent Persons to maintain their skills.
- 1.4 The Government has also put in place arrangements for independent persons (appointed for the above purposes) to be consulted if a Council proposed to dismiss their Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer or Chief Finance Officer. Whilst proposals to dismiss such officers are likely to be rare occurrences independent persons may be asked to play a part in the process.
- 1.5 The initial joint panel was set up in 2012. Given the passage of time and the new element to their role the Councils decided to refresh the list of independent persons. The role was advertised between 19th May and 12th June 2017. Following interview by the Monitoring Officers in June and July the Council confirmed some appointments on 18 July 2017. Ms Mumtaz

Goolam was interviewed on 26th July 2017 and the Council is asked to confirm her appointment as an independent person.

- 1.6 The appointments are expected to be for approximately 4 years at which point the Councils would expect to refresh the list of independents again.

2.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

Council decisions have immediate effect.

Background papers

None

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): N/A

Other members: N/A