

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON AND PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS OF FINANCE AND ASSETS SUB-COMMITTEE

To: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 30 May 2019

Author: Democratic Services Manager

[U7]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 To consider the appointment of Independent Persons and Parish Council Members of the Finance & Assets Sub-Committee.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 That Mr John Jones be appointed as an Independent Person to assist with Code of Conduct complaints against Councillors in accordance with the requirements of the Standards regime under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, to coincide with the term of office of District Councillors to May 2023.

2.2 That the following appointments of Parish Councillor Members on the Finance & Assets Hearings Sub-Committee be continued to coincide with the term of office of District Councillors to May 2023:

Parish Council Members:

Rosemary Aitchison (Soham TC)

Jo Waters (Little Downham PC)

3.0 **STANDARDS REGIME LOCALISM ACT 2011 – INDEPENDENT PERSONS & PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS**

3.1 At the Council meeting on 26 July 2012, Council approved the adoption of a new Code of Conduct for Members and a new Members complaints procedure to meet the requirements of the revised Standards Regime to be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011. These resolutions included the establishment of a Finance and Governance Hearings Sub-Committee, based on a membership of 7. They also included the appointment of an Independent Person and Deputy Independent Person to assist with Code of Conduct complaints under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, and appointment of 2 non-voting Co-opted Town/Parish Council Members to serve on the Finance and Governance Hearings Sub-Committee/Hearings Panels in accordance with the Terms of Reference for those bodies approved by the Council. The Independent Person and Deputy Independent Person and 2 non-voting Co-opted Town/Parish Council Members were subsequently appointed (with terms of office to 2019 to coincide with the term of office for District Councillors).

- 3.2 Since the requirements of the Standards Regime are ongoing, there is still a need to appoint at least one Independent Person, together with Co-opted Town/Parish Council Members. The Monitoring Officer approached the existing postholders and the existing Parish Council Members expressed a willingness to continue in these roles. Therefore, the Monitoring Officer is recommending that they be re-appointed for another term of office to coincide with the term of office for District Councillors.
- 3.3 However, the existing Independent Person and Deputy Independent Person, Mr Raith Overhill and Mrs Sue Booth, stated that they did not wish to continue in the roles due to changed personal/health circumstances. Therefore, the role was advertised and one application was received from Mr John Jones. Mr Jones is a JP on the Bedford Bench and has been involved in the Standards regime in Local Government since 1999, acting as an Independent Person for Central Bedfordshire Council, Luton BC, and is an Independent Panel Member for Police Disciplinary Hearings. The Monitoring Officer is recommending his appointment and will look at recruiting another Independent Person later in the year, or the possibility of some kind of shared arrangement with neighbouring Councils via the recently formed Cambridgeshire Monitoring Officers Group.

4.0 APPENDICES

4.1 None.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
Code of Conduct Complaints Handling & Hearings Procedures	Room 214B The Grange Ely	Tracy Couper Democratic Services Manager (01353) 665555 E-mail: tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk
Terms of Reference Finance & Assets Hearings Sub-Committee		
Independent Person Application Pack & Application Form: Mr John Jones		