

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE
FRIDAY 31 MARCH 2017 AT 2.00PM**

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Bradley (Chairman), Councillors Mrs Bowman, Mrs Mallinson, McDevitt and McDonald.

OFFICERS: Legal Services Manager

ST.01/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence submitted.

ST.02/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest affecting the business to be transacted at the meeting.

ST.03/17 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON

The Legal Services Manager submitted report GD.14/17 regarding the appointment of the Council's Independent Person.

The Manager reminded the Committee that the Localism Act 2011 required that the Council had at least one Independent Person (IP) to advise it in relation to Standards Matters (and other matters relating to any proposed dismissal of a statutory Chief Officer.)

Following an advertisement and full recruitment process the Council, on 16 July 2013, appointed Ms Jane Salmon (now Elliott) for a period until 30 June 2016 and Mr Keith Thomas until 30 June 2017 as the Council's Independent Persons. Ms Elliott's appointment was subsequently continued until 30 June 2020.

Following changes to the Officer Employment Procedure Rules from May 2015 the Independent Person must be invited to be considered for appointment to any Panel which may be set up to deal with any disciplinary cases involving the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer or Chief Finance Officer. Accordingly the Council's IPs were co-opted onto the Employment Panel.

Nothing had altered Mr Thomas's suitability for the post of IP since his appointment and it was recommended that his appointment be continued for a four year period at which time it could be reviewed again. If the Council did not continue with Mr Thomas's appointment it would be necessary to advertise for a new IP and it was likely that, due to his co-option as a member of the Employment Panel, he would not be able to apply. This was a quirk of the legislation unforeseen by the legislative draftsman.

RESOLVED – That the Standards Committee recommend to Council that it continue the appointment of Keith Thomas as an Independent Person until a review date of 30 June 2021.

ST.04/17 STANDARDS ACTIVITY REPORT 2016/17

The Legal Services Manager presented report GD.15/17 which updated the Committee on the Standards activity during the period 2016/17.

The Manager reported that the Council had received two code of conduct complaints, one relating to a Parish Councillor and one in respect of a City Councillor. Both complaints had been considered by the Monitoring Officer, the Chairman of Standards Committee and the Independent Person. It was agreed that the City Councillor complaint did not warrant a formal investigation and the Parish Council complaint and the Parish Councillor complaint had been deemed to be sufficient to be progressed to a formal investigation. The investigation had been concluded and the matter was felt suitable for local resolution.

RESOLVED – That report GD.15/17 Standards Activity Report 2016/17 be noted.

(The meeting ended at 2.02pm)