

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

1 September 2008

Independent Member Appointments

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the arrangements for the appointment of Independent Members to the Standards Committee.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2005, Mr Daghish was appointed to the Standards Committee as an independent Member for a four year period, until the annual County Council meeting in May 2009. Miss Fleming and Dr Holt are appointed until May 2011.
- 2.2 On 23 July 2008, the County Council agreed that an additional independent Member should be appointed to the Standards Committee.
- 2.3 It is now timely to consider any necessary recruitment processes for independent Member appointments.

3.0 RECRUITMENT PROCESS

- 3.1 Consideration has been given as to whether there should be a combined recruitment process for the new independent Member and the independent Member position currently held by Mr Daghish; however, given that the latter position is not due for appointment for some months, it is recommended that it should be subject to a separate recruitment process early next year.
- 3.2 It is recommended, however, that work should now commence to recruit the additional independent Member to the Committee. The Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008 state that a person may only be appointed as an independent Member of a standards committee if 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 submitted an application to the authority.

It will therefore be necessary for the authority to advertise for a new independent Member and to refer the appointment to the authority for approval by a majority. Regard must be had to the Regulations and the relevant Standards Board Guidance in the appointment of independent Members to the Standards Committee.

- 3.3 All functions in respect of the publication of independent Member vacancies were delegated to the Standards Committee by the Executive on 8 July 2008. The Standards Committee agreed at its last meeting that following such delegation, all such

functions should then be delegated to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

- 3.4 The power to assist in the recruitment of independent Members to the Standards Committee (but not to approve individual appointments) was also delegated to the Committee by the Executive on 8 July 2008.
- 3.5 It is therefore proposed that an appropriate advertisement be placed in a local newspaper and on the Council's website (and publicised in any other ways the Monitoring Officer and Chair of the Committee deem suitable), after which the Chair of the Committee and the Monitoring Officer would undertake short-listing of the applicants. Subsequently a meeting of this Committee would be required to interview the short-listed candidates. The Standards Committee would then recommend to the Authority, at its meeting on 17 December 2008, which candidate should be appointed.
- 3.6 With regard to the timetable, a special meeting of the Standards Committee may need to be convened before the beginning of December 2008 to interview the candidates in time to recommend an appointment to the Authority on 17 December. However, the Standards Committee does have a meeting scheduled on 10 November 2008 but this is currently earmarked as a training session for Members of the Committee. Members may feel, however, that given they have a training session on 30 September, the November meeting could be utilised for independent Member interviews.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the independent Member position currently held by Mr Daghish be subject to a separate recruitment process early next year;
- 4.2 That Members approve the process set out in this report for the appointment of an additional independent Member to the Committee;
- 4.3 That Members determine whether the Standards Committee meeting scheduled for 10 November 2008 should be used as a training session or for independent Member interviews.

CAROLE DUNN

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Background Documents:

Minutes of Standards Committee meetings.

The Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008

County Hall
NORTHALLERTON

4 August 2008