

REPORT FOR RESOLUTION

COMMITTEE: CONSTITUTIONAL AND NOMINATION COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL

DATE: 9 JULY 2008

SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE

REPORT OF: THE CITY SOLICITOR

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To enable the Constitutional and Nomination Committee to consider recommending that the City Council appoint three independent members to the Standards Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To recommend that the City Council appoint:

1. Elizabeth Carmichael and John Andrew Snadden as independent members of the Standards Committee commencing immediately for a period of three years;
2. Amanda Isles as an independent member of the Standards Committee commencing immediately upon receipt by the City Solicitor of satisfactory references for a period of two years; and
3. John Andrew Snadden as Chair of the Standards Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR REVENUE BUDGET:

Annual allowance for a 3rd independent member of the Standards Committee, currently £840 per annum.

FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR CAPITAL BUDGET:

None

WARDS AFFECTED

All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

1. Reports to the Constitutional and Nomination Committee 26 March and 13 May 2008
2. Report to the Standards Committee 10 March 2008
3. Local Government Act 2000
4. Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) Regulations 2001
5. Manchester Evening News advertisement

IMPLICATIONS FOR:

Antipoverty	Equal Opportunities	Environment	Employment
No	No	No	No

CONTACT OFFICERS:

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BACKGROUND

1. At its meeting on 26 March 2008, the City Council amended the Council's Constitution regarding the composition of the Standards Committee. This included increasing the number of independent members of the Standards Committee from two to three and introducing the requirement that the Chair of the Standards Committee must be an independent member. The City Council extended the terms of office of the Standards Committee's current independent members which were due to expire in May 2008, until the recruitment process for independent members had been completed and the City Council had approved the appointment of new independent members of the Standards Committee. The City Council also appointed John Andrew Snadden as the interim Chair of the Standards Committee.
2. At its meeting on 26 March 2008, the Constitutional and Nomination Committee noted that in accordance with the Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) Regulations 2001 ("the Regulations") arrangements had been made for an advert to be placed in the Manchester Metro and the Manchester Evening News inviting members of the public to apply for appointment to the office of independent member of the Standards Committee. The Regulations provide that appointments must be approved by a majority of the members of the City Council.
3. The Constitutional and Nomination Committee appointed a panel consisting of members of the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer to consider the applications received in response to the advertisement, and to interview those shortlisted. The appointment panel would make recommendations regarding the appointments to the Constitutional and Nominations Committee following which, the Constitutional and Nomination Committee will make its own recommendations to the City Council to make the appointments.

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

4. The appointment panel have completed their part of the selection process. Twelve completed application forms were received and five applicants were interviewed by the panel. Following the interviews, the panel determined to recommend:
 - (a) the appointment of Elizabeth Carmichael and John Andrew Snadden, as independent members of the Standards Committee commencing immediately upon the appointment by the City Council for a period of three years; and
 - (b) the appointment of Amanda Isles as an independent member of the Standards Committee commencing immediately upon receipt by the City Solicitor of satisfactory references for a period of two years.
5. Elizabeth Carmichael was appointed on 12 July 2006 as an independent member of the Standards Committee for a term expiring on 13 May 2008. Her appointment was extended on 13 May 2008 until the City Council approves the appointment of new independent members of the Standards Committee. Elizabeth Carmichael has been employed as a Support Services Advisor for HM Revenue and Customs since March 1987. She is experienced in discipline and grievance cases and appeals. Her role involves reviewing inspection reports and sitting on the discipline and grievance panels. She is a Panel Chair for the Health Professions Council, an independent regulator of 13 health professions and also a Hospital Manager, a voluntary post that involves sitting on a panel dealing with the voluntary detention of individuals under the Mental Health Act 1983. Satisfactory references for Elizabeth Carmichael have been received. The Constitutional and Nomination Committee is asked to recommend that the City Council appoint Elizabeth Carmichael as an independent member of the Standards Committee for a term commencing immediately upon the appointment for a period of three years.
6. John Andrew Snadden was appointed as an independent member of the Standards Committee on 17 May 2006 for a term expiring on 13 May 2008. His appointment was extended on 13 May 2008 until the City Council approves the appointment of new independent members of the Standards Committee. Mr Snadden has been employed as a prosecuting solicitor for the majority of his working life by the Crown Prosecution Service and has been a Divisional Crown Prosecutor since 2002. He is a Senior Manager with 16 years management experience. In addition, John Andrew Snadden has been a Chair of School Governors and has strong personal and professional links with the City of Manchester. Satisfactory references for John Andrew Snadden have been received. The Constitutional and Nomination Committee is asked to recommend that the City Council appoint John Andrew Snadden as an independent member of the Standards Committee for a term commencing immediately upon the appointment for a period of three years.

7. Amanda Isles has been employed as a Principal Lecturer in the School of Law at Manchester Metropolitan University for 12 years during which time she has regularly chaired meetings for the Legal Practice Course. From January to September 2006 she acted as a Complaints Officer for Halliwells Solicitors LLP and has experience of investigating complaints made by the practice's clients. She has also worked as a local authority solicitor in the litigation department, working with members of the public, Council officers and elected Members during which time she gained experience in advising committees. The City Solicitor has requested references for Ms Isles. The Constitutional and Nomination Committee is asked to recommend that the City Council appoint Amanda Isles as an independent member of the Standards Committee for a term of appointment commencing immediately upon receipt by the City Solicitor of satisfactory references for a period of two years.
8. The Panel has also requested that the remaining applicants be thanked for attending the interview.

APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER AS CHAIR OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

9. As noted above, the City Council appointed John Andrew Snadden as the interim Chair of the Standards Committee. The duration of the appointment is from 1 April 2008 until the new appointments of independent members are made by the City Council. The appointment was made in connection with standards committees' new role of initial assessment of misconduct allegations. Section 187 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 amends section 53(4) of the Local Government Act 2000 to require all standards committees to be chaired by an independent member rather than an elected member.
 10. The Constitutional and Nomination Committee is asked to recommend that the City Council appoint John Andrew Snadden as Chair of the Standards Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.
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