

Title of Report : INDEPENDENT MEMBERS – VACANCIES ON THE COMMITTEE

Report of : Head of Legal and Democratic Services

To : Standards Committee

Date : 1st December 2006 **Item No**

Purpose of report : To advise the Committee on present and impending vacancies for independent member position, and to outline the process to fill the vacancies.

Recommendation(s) : That the report be noted.

Key decision : No

Portfolio Holder : N/A

Scrutiny Responsibility : N/A

Ward(s) affected : All

Report Approved by : Legal (Jeremy Thomas)
Finance (Andy Collett)

Policy Framework : N/A

1. The Standards Committee consists of four elected members of Council (one from each political party represented on the Committee), one member (who is not a member of Council) representing our parish councils and three independent members.
2. One independent member resigned from the Committee at the beginning of the Council Year. One independent member, whose term of appointment expires at the end of the 2007/08 Council Year, has indicated that he would like to stand down at the end of the current (ie. 2006/07) Council Year. The term of the appointment of the third independent member (who is currently the Chair of the Committee) expires at the end of the current Council Year.
3. All three independent member positions will effectively fall vacant at the end of the current Council Year and so we need to recruit, interview

and select three further members. Existing independent members may reapply if they wish.

4. We intend to advertise the vacancies and seek applications to fill them early in the 2007 calendar year. We will advertise in the local press and on our website. We will prepare what will amount to a job description and a person specification for the position.
5. On the term of office of independent members, at present we have two positions falling vacant at the end of the current Council Year and the third position falling vacant at the end of the 2007/08 Council Year. This arrangement would have provided a rolling programme of independent member expertise. Whilst we could advertise the three positions for a two, three and four year period (thus maintaining the rolling expertise) we might not achieve this ideal, and it might prove confusing to potential applicants. What I favour therefore is to advertise the positions for a four year period but to say in the advertisement that if people cannot commit to that length of time we could consider a shorter period. We also need to decide upon the interviewing arrangements. I suggest that all four elected members on the Committee constitute the interviewing panel. The panel will recommend the Annual Council meeting in May 2007 upon the new appointments.
6. The Committee is being recommended to note this report.

Name and contact details of author:-

William Reed
Democratic Services Manager
Town Hall Oxford OX1 4YS
Tel: 01865 252230 e-mail: wreed@oxford.gov.uk

Background papers: None