

STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP
22 August 2011

Present: Councillors: Councillor Mary Aspinall and Councillor John Mahoney.
Officers: Tim Howes AD Democracy and Governance and Monitoring Officer, David Shepperd Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer and Linda Torney Deputy Head of Legal Services.

This Working Group was convened at the behest of the Standards Committee meeting held on the 6th July 2011 where it was agreed a Working Group should review:

- (a) The recruitment/dismissal/conduct and monitoring procedures for independent members;
- (b) The management of a former independent member, and involve the Chief Executive in this process*;

The process for the recruitment of independent members was described and a copy of the paperwork associated with the process was circulated to those present at the Working Group meeting. During the discussion it was confirmed that references are requested and that Members undertook the short-listing and appointment process which included an interview for prospective candidates.

No specific concerns or recommendations for change were made in respect of the appointment process.

It was confirmed that the same appointment process was followed for all independent members.

The working group were advised that in accordance with the Local Standards Framework Guide, 'Complaints about the conduct of independent members must be treated in the same way as that of other members.' Therefore for any action to be taken against a member for alleged misconduct there needs to be a complaint setting out how the members conduct has breached the Code.

It was agreed by the working group to make the following recommendations to the Standards Committee:

1. The process for making a complaint about a member's conduct should be made clear to all members.
2. That independent members should be appointed for a fixed period (as at present), but that should be subject to annual review.
3. That the process under 2. above, should be recommended to other committees which appointed independent/co-opted members.

* This preliminary meeting did not include the Chief Executive.