

Report to	Standards Committee
Date of meeting	4 th March 2022
Lead Member / Officer	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
Report author	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
Title	Process for Recruiting Independent Members of Standards Committee

1. What is the report about?

1.1. The report is about the process for recruiting independent members of Standards Committees.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To inform the Committee of the requirement to recruit independent members of the Standards Committee and the process by which this must be done.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That the Committee notes the contents of the report and endorses the proposed approach to the recruitment of independent members of the Committee.

4. Report details

4.1. The Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001 set out provisions regarding the size and composition of standards committees. Standards committees must have no less than five members and no more than nine.

4.2. The Denbighshire Standards Committee (the Committee) is made up of seven members. The Regulations provide that where the membership of a standards committee is an odd number, there must be a majority of independent members. There are therefore four independent members of the Committee.

The remainder of the Committee is made up of two County Councillors and a Community Council member.

- 4.3. Independent members of the Committee may serve up to two terms. It is possible for a council to reappoint an independent member at the end of their first term, for one more term without having to repeat the recruitment process. In May 2021, Council reappointed Julia Hughes and Anne Mellor for a second term to expire in May 2025.
- 4.4. The first term of office of Peter Lamb is due to expire in May 2022 and it is proposed that a report be taken to County Council seeking his reappointment for a second term.
- 4.5. The Chair of the Committee, Ian Trigger, who is also an independent member is approaching the end of his second term of office which is due to expire in May 2022. It will therefore be necessary for the Council to set in motion a recruitment process for an independent member. The Regulations require that the vacancy be advertised in at least two newspapers circulating in the area. The Council must establish a panel of no more than five people, to include at least one community councillor and one lay member. In previous recruitment exercises Council has been asked to nominate three county councillors to sit on the panel in addition to the lay member and community councillor. The Panel will interview applicants and make a recommendation to Council. Council will be asked to appoint the recommended candidate.
- 4.6. The Community Council representative on the Committee, Gordon Hughes was appointed for a first term in February 2018. A Community Council representative's term of office must come to an end at the local government election following his or her appointment. It is possible for a Community Council representative to serve a second term provided that they remain a city, town or community councillor. Before a community council representative may be reappointed it is a requirement that the Council consults city, town and community councils in its area. This is a process that can be considered following the local government elections.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1. A fully functioning and representative Standards Committee which upholds the high standards expected of Members helps underpin the Council's exercise of its democratic functions

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. Independent members are entitled under the law to a daily fee and to have travel expenses reimbursed as set out in the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' report each year.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. An assessment is not required for this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. There have been no consultations with Scrutiny or others.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. The financial implications of this report will be funded from existing budget allocations.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. The Council Constitution stipulates that there are to be four independent members. The risk of not appointing members to the Standards Committee is that a reduced membership may increase the likelihood of the Committee being inquorate

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001 as amended.