

Standards Committee : 12 October 2010
Title of report: Appointment of External Members to Standards Committee

Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	N/A
Is it in the Council's Forward Plan?	N/A
Is it eligible for "call in" by Scrutiny?	N/A
Cabinet member portfolio	Corporate

Electoral wards affected and ward councillors consulted: All

Public or private: Public

1. Purpose of Report

To report to Standards Committee the decision made by Council at its meeting on 15 September 2010.

2. Key Points

At its annual meeting on 26 May 2010 Council approved the proposal of the Standards Committee to increase the number of external members of Standards Committee from four to five and to recruit two new external members, one to replace an external member who had resigned and one to make the number of external members up to five.

On 15 September 2010 a report was taken to Council to seek Council's ratification of the appointments made. The decision of Council was that the appointment of Raymond Helm and Janet Gregory as external members of the Standards Committee be ratified, subject to their term of office applying to 31 March 2011. In the ordinary course of events the membership of committees, including Standards Committee, will be decided by Council at its annual meeting on 25 May 2011.

This leaves an interval between the expiry of the two new external members' terms of office on 31 March 2011 and confirmation of who are to be the

external members of Standards Committee at the 25 May 2011 annual meeting. By law 25% of the membership of standards committees must be made up of external members, which on the present composition of 6 Kirklees members, 5 external members and 4 parish members (with a current vacancy for a parish member to be filled) requires a minimum of 4 external members.

When the two new external members' terms of office expire on 31 March 2010 the number of external members will fall below 4 unless further appointments of external members are made to cover the period 31 March 2010 and the annual meeting on 25 May 2011. There are no Standards Committee meetings arranged during the interval but for any period during which the Standards Committee membership does not meet the legal requirements, any meetings of its local assessment and review panels or its determination sub-committees will not be properly constituted.

This means that it will be necessary to have at least 4 external members, and to meet with the current 6-5-4 membership of Standards Committee, preferably 5 external members in place during the interval. This would require one or two new external members to be appointed for a period covering the interval or a longer period,. If the new external members were to be replaced with effect from 31 March 2011 any candidates would presumably wish to be offered a term of office greater than the 7 weeks or so of the interval period.

3. Implications for the Council

In order to meet its statutory obligations under the Local Government Act 2000 the Council needs a properly constituted Standards Committee in place until such time as the standards regime is abolished.

4. Consultees and their opinions

N/a

5. Officer recommendations and reasons

That the Committee authorise the Monitoring Officer to conduct a further recruitment exercise to ensure that two external members are recruited to Standards Committee with effect from 1 April 2011.

6. Cabinet portfolio holder recommendation

N/a

7. Next steps

To carry out any recruitment process authorised by Standards Committee.

8. Contact officer and relevant papers

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Background Papers:

None