

**COUNCIL**

**On 22 May 2006**

Report Title: Appointment of Independent Member for Standards Committee

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable): N/A

Report of: Davina Fiore, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Wards(s) affected: All

Report for: Decision

**1. Purpose**

1.1 To seek Council approval for the appointment of Carol Sykes as an independent member on the Standards Committee.

**2. Recommendation**

2.1 To approve the appointment of Carol Sykes to serve as an independent member on the Standards Committee from May 2006 for four years.

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**3. Executive Summary**

3.1 The Council's Constitution requires the Standards Committee to have four independent members. At the Council meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2006, Nicholas Weber, Irene Francis and Roger Lovegrove were appointed to serve as independent members on the Standards Committee from May 2006 for two years. It was agreed that the additional independent member be appointed for four years after a recruitment exercise.

#### **4. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

4.1 Local Government Act 2000

4.2 Council's Constitution

4.3 Standards Board for England Guidance

4.4 Member Services and Legal Services files.

#### **5. Background**

5.1 The Standards Committee is required by national legislation to have at least one independent member and also independent members must form 25% of the committee. The rules in relation to political balance do not apply to Standards Committees. Legislation provides that:

- Independent members must not have been a member or employee of Haringey Council within 5 years before the date of appointment.
- Independent members must not be a relative or close friend of a member or employee of Haringey Council
- Independent members must have filled in an application form
- Independent members must have been approved by the majority of the Council's members.
- All meetings of the Standards Committee or hearings held, have to have an independent member present in order for the meeting to be quorate.

5.2 This Council's Constitution provides that the Standards Committee is composed of 8 councillors and 4 independent members and that the independent members must not be councillors or officers of the Council or any other body with a Standards Committee.

5.3 In September the Standards Committee considered a report on the recruitment of independent members to serve on the Standards Committee from May 2006. It agreed a revised job description, person specification, advertisement and application process to result in a recommendation to full Council.

5.4 The advert to recruit independent members was placed at the start of October in Local Haringey newspapers, (Camden Gazette, EC1 Gazette, Islington Gazette, Hornsey and Crouch End Journal, Muswell Hill Journal, Tottenham, Wood Green and Edmonton Journal), in Haringey People and on the Haringey Council website with a closing date of 14 November 2005. The Monitoring Officer received a number of telephone calls from people expressing an interest and 17 application packs were sent out. Three completed application forms were received. Cllrs Winskill and Robertson met and considered the applications, advised by the Monitoring Officer. Two of the applications met the shortlisting criteria, and the applicants were invited to an interview. Both applicants were interviewed by Councillors Winskill and

Robertson, advised by the Monitoring Officer. The highest scoring candidate is recommended for appointment for four years from May 2006.

## **6. Recommendation**

6.1 To approve the appointment of Carol Sykes to serve as an independent member on the Standards Committee from May 2006 for four years.

## **7. Comments of the Director of Finance**

7.1 There are no financial implications.

## **8. Comments of the Head of Legal Services**

8.1 The legal position is set out in the report.

## **9. Equalities Implications**

9.1 Recruitment has taken place in accordance with the Council's policies.