

## RECRUITMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS FOR STANDARDS MATTERS

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
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Wards Affected: All  
Key Decision No  
Report To: Council  
27 March 2024

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### Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to appoint the Independent Persons for Standards Matters for a four-year term from 1 May 2024.

### Summary

2. Vacancies for the position of Independent Persons for Standard Matters have been advertised across the District and applicants have been interviewed by the Appointments Panel. The Council are asked to confirm the Appointment Panel's recommendations regarding the successful applicants.

### Recommendations

3. **Council are recommended to:**
    - (i) **appoint three Independent Persons to the Standards Committee (Amanda Rogers, Wendy Swinton Eagle and Paul Cummins) for a four year term from 1 May 2024 to 30 April 2028.**
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### Background

4. The Independent Persons for Standards Matters attend the Standards Committee, which meets approximately three times a year, and also advise the Monitoring Officer on complaints against Members received and also throughout the investigation of such a Code of Conduct complaint.
5. The advice of the Committee on Standards in Public Life suggests that there should be a minimum of two Independent Persons on Standards Matters.
6. The current Panel's term of office concludes on 30 April 2024. One Member (Dr David Horne) is required to stand down having completed the maximum of two consecutive terms of office. The other two current Panel Members have only served one term.

### Recruitment Process

7. Three vacancies were advertised through local media, with Town and Parish Councils and on the Council's website, with a deadline of 29 February 2024 to submit applications. The Appointments Panel (comprising Councillors Cornish and Wood and Monitoring Officer Kevin Toogood) interviewed six candidates on 14 March 2024.
8. The Panel was impressed by the quality of the applicants and recommend appointing three candidates, to allow for the ability to maintain a minimum of two in attendance at each meeting. The recommended candidates are:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Term ends</b>	<b>Committee or Panel</b>
Amanda Rogers	30 April 2028	Standards Committee
Wendy Swinton Eagle	30 April 2028	Standards Committee
Paul Cummins	30 April 2028	Standards Committee

9. Amanda Rogers has experience working in Local Government as the Director of Adults Services at West Sussex County Council as well as roles at Medway Council and at Kent Council Social Services. She has experience as Chair of the Board of Directors at Treehouse Educare Ltd and has also served as a Member of the Independent Monitoring Board of HMP Lewes.
10. Wendy Swinton Eagle has 12 years' experience serving as a Commissioned Officer in the Women's Royal Army Corps and was the Relocation Officer and Deputy Head of the Allowances Department of the BBC. She has experience of running her own business and has been part of several networking organisations. More recently she has been involved in various voluntary roles including at Mid Downs Radio and at the League of Friends Coffee shop at the Princess Royal Hospital. Since 2020 she has served one term of office as the Independent Person for Standards Matters at Mid Sussex District Council.
11. Paul Cummins has experience working in Local Government for 18 years, most of which was as a Monitoring Officer in three District and Borough Councils as well as Head of the Legal Department. He was one of a lead group of Monitoring Officers to draft a Code of Conduct for Kent Authorities following the changes brought about by the Localism Act 2011. He is currently employed as Head of Adjudication Services at the General Pharmaceutical Council, overseeing hearings into Fitness to Practice and conduct issues. Since 2020 he has served one term of office as the Independent Person for Standards Matters at Mid Sussex District Council.
12. The Council has decided to appoint three Independent Persons for Standards Matters in accordance with section 28 (7) of the Localism Act 2011.

### **Financial Implications**

13. There were minimal costs incurred for the recruitment process and these were within budget. An allowance of £750 per person per year is paid to the Independent Persons.

### **Risk Management Implications**

14. There are no risk management implications.

### **Other Material Implications**

15. None.

### **Sustainability Implications**

16. None.

### **Equality and Customer Service Implications**

17. The recruitment for new Independent Persons in 2024 was open to all members of the public.

### **Background Papers**

None.