



Full Council	Tuesday, 15 April 2025	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Appointment of Independent Persons (2025-2029)**

Report Author(s): **David Gill (Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	To appoint a panel of Independent Persons (IP's) for the purposes of the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.
Report Summary:	In September 2024, the District and Borough Monitoring Officers agreed to a joint recruitment exercise to select new IP's. It was felt that this approach had secured a selection of good quality candidates in the past and would provide resilience by continuing the pool arrangement.
Recommendation(s):	That Council re-appoint the Independent Persons listed in paragraph 2.2 and appoint the new Independent Persons listed in paragraph 2.3 of the report for a term of office of four years commencing on 13 May 2025 until the Annual General Meeting scheduled for May 2029
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	David Gill (Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer) (0116) 257 2626 david.gill@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Resourceful & Resilient (V4) Customer & Community Focused (V1)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	The implications are as set out at paragraphs 1.1 and 2.5 of this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Reputation Damage (CR4) Regulatory Governance (CR6) Political Dynamics (CR3)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	

Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	As the author, the report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. Resume of Proposed Appointees / IP's (Confidential)

1. Background

- 1.1. On 26 June 2012, Council considered a report which detailed the changes to the role of the Independent Person (IP) introduced to the Standards Regime under the Localism Act 2011 ("the Act"). Under the Act, the IP is involved from the outset in any allegations about conduct under the Members' Code of Conduct.
- 1.2. Since then, the Council has been part of an IP pool arrangement with the seven other Leicestershire District and Borough Councils. Appointment to the pool has been via a joint recruitment exercise led by a working group comprising 3 Monitoring Officers.
- 1.3. Appointments were made to the pool in 2012 and 2016 and 2021 following the extension of the terms of office of each IP in 2020 to enable Council's to synchronise their respective terms of office and due to a pause in the recruitment process due to coronavirus (COVID-19) respectively. The term of office of the current pool expires at the Annual Council Meeting (AGM) 13 May 2025.

2. Recruitment Process

- 2.1 In September 2024, the District and Borough Monitoring Officers agreed to a joint recruitment exercise to select new IP's. It was felt that this approach had secured a selection of good quality candidates in the past and would provide resilience by continuing the pool arrangement.
- 2.2 In March 2025 Rutland County Council also joined the pool.
- 2.3 The recruitment exercise was led by the Monitoring Officers from Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, Blaby District Council and Charnwood Borough Council.
- 2.4 A decision was taken to invite expressions of interest from current members of the IP pool who would be eligible for re-appointment i.e. those having served no more than 1 term as an IP as it is good practice to limit the role of an IP acting for any particular authority to no more than 2 terms to ensure continued independence, along with expressions of interest from the general public.
- 2.5 It was also agreed amongst the Monitoring Officer group that where a current IP submitted an expression of interest a further interview would be unnecessary and it is recommended that the following IP's be re-appointed: Following a recruitment process and interview, the following six candidates are recommended as appointment as IPs:
 - Mr Gordon Grimes
 - Mr Richard Gough
 - Mr Michael Pearson
 - Mr Laurence Faulkner

- Mr Mark Shaw
- 2.6 Expressions of interest were received from 2 further candidates and following interviews conducted by the Monitoring officer working group it is also recommended that the following 2 candidates be appointed to the pool:
- Matthew Johnson
 - Michael Chad Smith
- 2.7 A brief résumé of each candidate is as set out at **Appendix 1** which are confidential.
- 2.8 In addition, as a result of changes introduced by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, where an authority is considering the dismissal of a Statutory Officer, it is required to appoint a committee (referred to in the regulations as "the Panel") to consider the proposed dismissal which must include at least 2 "Independent Persons".
- 2.9 When Council approved the amendments to the Constitution in November 2015, to reflect the legislative changes in the dismissal procedure, it decided to appoint the IP's appointed for the purposes of the Standards Regime as Independent Persons for the purposes of the dismissal procedure.
- 2.10 It is recommended that the IP's are appointed until the Annual General Meeting in May 2029.