

Agenda Item 73.

TITLE	Appointment of a Town/Parish Council Representative to the Standards Committee
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Council on 20 January 2022
WARD	None specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Monitoring Officer - Andrew Moulton

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To confirm the appointment of a Town/Parish Council representative on the Standards Committee. The Committee's role is to ensure that elected Members of Borough, Town and Parish Councils achieve the highest standards of behaviour in carrying out their roles.

RECOMMENDATION

That Councillor Sheena Matthews (Earley Town Council) be appointed as a Town/Parish Council representative on the Standards Committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Standards Committee includes seven Borough Council Members and three co-opted (non-voting) Town/Parish Members. Of the three Town/Parish Members at least one should be a Town Council representative.

Current Town/Parish representatives on the Standards Committee are Sally Gurney (Wokingham Town Council) and Roy Mantel (Twyford Parish Council).

The process for appointing the Town/Parish representatives is overseen by the Monitoring Officer and one of the Council's Independent Persons. Any recommended appointment is agreed by the full Council.

The report sets out the process followed in filling a vacancy for one of the Town/Parish representatives and asks the Council to approve the recommended appointment.

BACKGROUND

1. The Standards Committee includes seven Borough Council Members and three co-opted (non-voting) Town/Parish Members. Of the three Town/Parish Members at least one should be a Town Council representative.
2. Current Town/Parish representatives on the Standards Committee are Sally Gurney (Wokingham Town Council) and Roy Mantel (Twyford Parish Council).
3. The Council's Constitution states that a Town/Parish Member should be present when matters relating to Town/Parish Councils or their Members are being considered by the Standards Committee. A Town/Parish representative is also part of any Hearings Panel convened to consider an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct by a Town or Parish Member.
4. The process for appointing the Town/Parish representatives is overseen by the Monitoring Officer and one of the Council's Independent Persons. Any recommended appointment is agreed by the full Council.
5. The report sets out the process followed in filling a vacancy for one of the Town/Parish representatives. Each of the Borough's Town and Parish Councils were asked to nominate potential candidates to fill the vacancy.
6. The Monitoring Officer and Independent Person subsequently interviewed four candidates for the vacancy on the Standards Committee. Following this process it was agreed that Councillor Sheena Matthews (Earley Town Council) was the most suitable candidate. Councillor Matthews has accepted the appointment, subject to ratification by full Council.
7. Council is requested to confirm the appointment of Councillor Sheena Matthews as a Town/Parish Council representative on the Standards Committee.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	N/A	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
None

Cross-Council Implications
The role of the Standards Committee is to ensure the highest standards of behaviour for elected Members in the Borough, Town and Parish Councils across the Borough.

Public Sector Equality Duty
Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; • advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; • foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. <p>These principles have been considered in the drafting of this report.</p>

List of Background Papers
None

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