

**Open Report on behalf of David O'Connor- Assistant Chief Executive**

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| Report to: | <b>County Council</b>  |
| Date:      | <b>18 June 2010</b>  |
| Subject:   | <b>Appointment of an Independent Member to the Standards Committee</b> |

**Summary:**

The purpose of this report is to recommend the appointment of Mr Stephen John Williams as an Independent Member of the Council's Standards Committee. Biographical information relating to Mr Williams is at Appendix A.

**Recommendation(s):**

That the County Council approves the appointment of Mr Stephen John Williams as an Independent Member of the Standards Committee.

**1. Background**

On 13 December 2002, the County Council established a Standards Committee Appointments Panel to be responsible for making recommendations to Council on the appointments to fill any vacancies for independent (ie:- non-elected) members on the Standards Committee. That Panel comprises all Group Leaders (or their nominees), the two Deputy Leaders of the Council (or their nominees) and one extra member from the Ruling Group, if possible together with the Chairman of the Standards Committee (or other independent member as a substitute).

The current vacancy is due to the recent departure from the Committee of its former Chairman, Group Captain Phil Rodgers MBE, who had served on the Committee for four years (three as Chairman).

An advertisement and supporting article appeared in the May 2010 edition of Inside Lincolnshire in relation to the vacancy for independent member of the Standards Committee that had arisen when Group Captain Rodgers left the Committee in May 2010. A public notice also appeared in the Lincolnshire Echo newspaper dated 12 May 2010. In addition, for the first time, members of the public could apply on-line by way of the Council's own website. A total of 28 information packs were despatched and 12 applications were received by the closing date of Friday 21 May 2010.

A shortlisting exercise was carried out by members of the Standards Committee Appointments Panel on 1 June 2010. Candidates were assessed and the Panel was looking for a broad range of experience across the public, private, voluntary and charitable sectors, and in particular for the following essential qualities:-

- *good analytical skills and ability to demonstrate clarity of thought*
- *independence, objectivity and impartiality*
- *a high level of integrity*
- *good interpersonal skills*

Four individuals, including Mr Williams, were subsequently interviewed by the Panel on the 10 June 2010. The Interviewing Panel comprised Councillors Turner (who acted as Chairman), Mrs C Talbot, H Johnson, Jackson and Sellars.

Following the interviews, Mr Williams was the Panel's first choice to fill the vacancy, in terms of the scoring of the candidates and of the Panel's preferences. He has provided the requisite two satisfactory references.

It is also proposed that, subject to this appointment being confirmed by Council, and in order to comply with the Protocol on Independent Members now in force, the new Independent Member should serve an initial term of no more than three years and that the appointment will therefore expire at the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2013.

## **2. Conclusion**

Another successful recruitment campaign with a higher than average response rate.

The Standards Committee will be back to full strength if Mr Williams is appointed.

## **3. Legal Comments:**

Under the Local Government Act 2000, most local authorities have to set up standards committees consisting of at least two elected members (councillors) and one non-elected (independent) member. Under the Council's Constitution, our Standards Committee comprises five elected and five non-elected members.

It is a statutory requirement that any appointment as an independent member of the Standards Committee has to be approved by full Council.

## **4. Resource Comments:**

n/a

## 5. Consultation

### a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

n/a

### b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

n/a

### c) Scrutiny Comments

Not Applicable

### d) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

## 6. Appendices

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| These are listed below and attached at the back of the report |  |
| Appendix A  | Biographical Information- Mr Stephen John Williams |

## 7. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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