

Title of Report	APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS 2021-2025	
Presented by	Councillor Nick Rushton Corporate Portfolio Holder	
Background Papers	Council Report 21 May 2019 – Appointment of Independent Persons Council report – 23 June 2020 -Appointment of Independent Persons	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	None	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	None except as stated in this Report	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	There are no specific staffing issues arising from this Report.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To appoint the pool of Independent Persons in accordance with legislative requirements.	
Recommendations	THAT COUNCIL APPOINT THE INDEPENDENT PERSONS LISTED IN PARAGRAPH 2.2 OF THE REPORT FOR A TERM OF OFFICE OF FOUR YEARS UNTIL ANNUAL COUNCIL IN MAY 2025	

1.0 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. Under the Act, the Independent Person 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. Appointments were made to the pool in 2012 and 2016 and the terms of office of each IP were extended in 2020 and 2021 to enable Council's to synchronise their respective terms of office and due to a pause in the recruitment process due to COVID 19 respectively. The term of office of the current pool expires at the Annual Council meeting.

2.0 RECRUITMENT PROCESS

2.1 In January 2021, the District and Borough Monitoring Officers agreed to a joint recruitment exercise to select new IPs. 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. The recruitment exercise was led by the Monitoring Officers from North West Leicestershire District Council, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and Melton Borough Council. Following a recruitment process and interview, the following six candidates are recommended for appointment as IPs:

Mr Michael Gibson
Mr Gordon Grimes
Mr Richard Gough
Mr Michael Pearson
Mr Laurence Faulkner
Mr Mark Shaw

A brief resume of each candidate can be found at Appendix 1. It is recommended that the IPs are appointed until Annual Council in May 2025. The Leicestershire MOs have agreed to co-fund training for the IPs which will be provided following Council, should the appointments be confirmed.

2.2 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”.

2.3 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 Independent Persons appointed for the purposes of the Standards Regime as Independent Persons for the purposes of the dismissal procedure.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	Maintaining and promoting high standards of member conduct supports all the Council's priorities.
Policy Considerations:	The Council has adopted arrangements for dealing with complaints about member conduct.
Safeguarding:	N/A
Equalities/Diversity:	An open and transparent recruitment process was followed.
Customer Impact:	The IPs could be consulted by MOs, councillors and members of the public.
Economic and Social Impact:	N/A
Environment and Climate Change:	N/A
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Independent Persons Advertisement – advertised across Leicestershire.

Risks:	Outlined within the report
Officer Contact	Elizabeth Warhurst Head of Legal and Commercial Services elizabeth.warhurst@nwleicestershire.gov.uk