

# Council

10 December 2020



<b>Title</b>	<b>Appointment of Chair/Vice Chair of Members' Code of Conduct Committee</b>
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report Author</b>	Victoria Statham, Monitoring Officer
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Boughtflower
<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Council is asked to appoint:</b>  <b>Ian Winter as the Chair of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee; and</b> <b>Dylan Price as the Vice Chair of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee,</b> <b>until the next Annual Council meeting in May 2021.</b>

## **1. Requirement for appointments**

- 1.1 The Council's constitution specifies that the Members' Code of Conduct Committee shall consist of 8 councillors and two independent members who are not staff or Councillors.
- 1.2 The Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee shall be from those two independent members. They are there in an advisory capacity and are not entitled to vote at meetings.
- 1.3 At the Annual Council meeting in 2020 the Members' Code of Conduct Committee was appointed in terms of the councillor members, but since that time there has not been an independent member of that Committee and therefore, under the terms of the Constitution, the Committee has not been able to sit.
- 1.4 It is with gratitude that the Council thanks the long-standing previous Chair of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee, Murray Litvak who has given so many dedicated years of service to the role.

## **2. Recruitment process**

- 2.1 The recruitment process and a recruitment pack were produced in consultation with the Group Leaders. The pack included a person specification stating the essential and desirable requirements for the role, these being:

(a) Essential

As well as being of good character, Independent members of the Code of Conduct Committee must:

1. Bring the qualities of impartiality to any decisions which have to be made by the committee;
2. Possess the ability to take an objective approach to decision making without being swayed by popular opinions or influenced by more powerful and articulate councillors taking part in the decision making;
3. Demonstrate the ability to consider contentious matters fairly;
4. Understand and weigh up evidence objectively;
5. Be able to deal with substantial documentation and to analyses and interpret that which is important, meaningful and relevant;
6. Respect others and have respect for strong ethical values;
7. Be a good listener with an open mind;
8. Be able to constructively challenge the accepted views of others and put forward clear and logical alternatives; and
9. Possess good written and oral communication skills.

(b) Desirable

It would be desirable for the Independent members to the Code of Conduct Committee to have:

1. Had involvement in or knowledge of public authorities or voluntary organisations;
2. Experience for working in a committee setting, research groups, investigations panels or other similar situations;
3. Experience in dealing with complaints;
4. Knowledge of the role of Councillors in a public authority; and/or
5. Knowledge of the Nolan Principles.

- 2.2 The role was advertised on the Council's website, on all social media channels and in the local newspaper.
- 2.3 There was a positive response to the advertisement with four applications for the role. All four candidates were interviewed.
- 2.4 The interviews were undertaken by the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Paul Hoey as an independent advisor. Paul Hoey was selected to be on the interview panel due to his expertise in this area. He was Director of Strategy at Standards for England from 2001 until its closure in 2013, and he has worked with over 400 authorities in one form or another through provision of training, investigative support and wider governance advice.

- 2.5 The interview panel were unanimous in their decision on the recommendation to put before the Council.

### **3. Recommendation for appointments**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Council appoint Ian Winter as Chair and Dylan Price as Vice Chair of the Members' Code of Conduct Committee as both candidates clearly demonstrated the essential and desirable elements.
- 3.2 Ian Winter has considerable experience in chairing meetings both in his voluntary capacity (Chair of School Governors) and in a professional capacity. He demonstrated a strong ability to take an objective approach to decision making and considering contentious matters in a fair way.
- 3.3 Dylan Price clearly showed he would bring to the Committee as Vice Chair the ability to deal with substantial documentation and to analyse and interpret that which is important, meaningful and relevant and the ability to understand and weigh up evidence objectively. This was clearly evidenced by both his pastoral roles and academic pursuits.
- 3.4 Both of these candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of local government and the Nolan Principles.

### **4. Next steps**

- 4.1 If the Council is minded to approve the appointments, training for the Chair and Vice Chair would be provided early in the new year prior to the first scheduled meeting of the committee in 2021.