

## APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE AND INDEPENDENT PERSON

<b>Council</b>	<b>9 July 2020</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Tim Howes, Director of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer</b>
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Services</b>
<b>Status</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Classification:</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>
<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>No</b>

### **Executive Summary:**

This report asks Council to confirm the appointments of the Independent Person and the Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee. This was as a result of the postponement of the Annual Council when these appointments were due to be made.

### **Recommendation(s):**

- 1) Mr Dennis James should be appointed as Thanet District Council's Independent Person for a new four term from this meeting.
  
- 2) Mr Peter Tucker should be appointed as the Chairman of the Standards Committee for a four year term from this meeting.

### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Financial and Value for Money</b>	Independent Members of the Standards Committee are entitled to a small Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA). These allowances are included in the approved 2019/20 Budget.
<b>Legal</b>	The Council has established a process for handling complaints through the Standards Committee which involves Independent Members which is compliant with the Localism Act 2011.
<b>Corporate</b>	The continued appointment of Independent Members to the Standards Committee will enhance public trust and confidence in the operation of the Council's ethical governance arrangements
<b>Equalities Act 2010 &amp; Public Sector Equality Duty</b>	Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

	Protected characteristics: age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.	
	Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.	
	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,	✓
	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it	
	Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	
There are no specific issues related to this decision.		

<b>CORPORATE PRIORITIES (tick those relevant) ✓</b>	
Environment	
Growth	
Communities	✓

## 1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 This issue was previously considered at the Council meeting on 27 February 2020, with an expectation that confirmation of the appointments would occur at Annual Council however the Annual Council meeting was postponed.

## 2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 At the Council meeting of 27 February it was agreed that:
1. Mr Dennis James should be appointed as Thanet District Council's Independent Person for a new four term from the Annual Council meeting in May 2020.
  2. Ms Causier should be appointed as an Independent Member of the Standards Committee for a one year term with immediate effect.
  3. Mr Tucker should be appointed as an Independent Member of the Standards Committee with immediate effect. In addition he should also be initially appointed as Thanet District Council's Vice Chairman of the Standards Committee until the Council's Annual meeting on 14th May, where he should then be appointed as the Chairman of the Standards Committee for a new four year term.
- 2.2 As the Annual Meeting of Council was postponed, this meeting should confirm the appointment of Mr Dennis James and Mr Peter Tucker.
- 2.3 Councillors will note there remains two vacancies for independent Members. The Council is currently re-advertising for these positions.
- 2.4 The Council wishes to place on record its thanks to Dr Sexton for his time as the Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee and his work assisting the Council with its improvement plan.

## 4.0 Options

- 4.1 To confirm the nominations of Mr Dennis James and Mr Peter Tucker.
- 4.2 The Council could choose not to confirm the nominations. If this is the decision taken, an entirely new recruitment process would be required to recruit suitable persons to act as Independent Members/Persons. This would cause a significant delay in handling matters for investigation through the Standards process and is not recommended.

## 5.0 Decision Making Process

- 5.1 Council is required to confirm the appointment of Independent Members to the Standards Committee and the Independent Persons to ensure that they have a mandate to be able to perform their functions in that role.

Contact Officer:	Tim Howes – Director of Corporate Governance & Monitoring Officer
Reporting to:	Madeline Homer – Chief Executive

## Annex List

None	
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## Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	

## Corporate Consultation

<b>Finance</b>	Matthew Sanham, Financial Services Manager
<b>Legal</b>	Tim Howes, Director of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer