

TITLE	: STANDARDS COMMITTEE – INDEPENDENT MEMBERS		
TO / ON	: COUNCIL	9 APRIL 2003	
REPORT FROM	: DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES		
STATUS	: FOR PUBLICATION		

1.0 TYPE OF DECISION

1.1 What type of decision is to be taken:-

EXECUTIVE DECISION			COUNCIL DECISION	
Key		Non Key		YES

1.2 If a key decision, has it been included in the Forward Plan

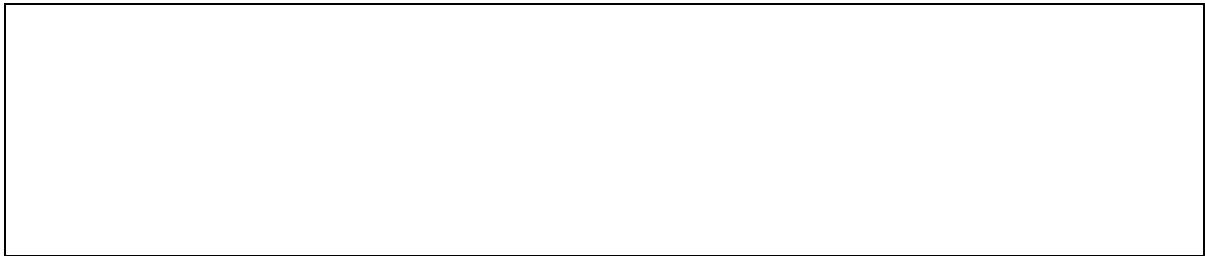
Inclusion in Forward Plan	N/A	Date of Plan	
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2.0 SUMMARY

The current Independent Members of the Standards Committee were appointed until May 2003. The Council is asked to approve a mechanism for the appointment of independent persons to serve on the Standards Committee beyond this date.

3.0 OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDED OPTIONS (with reasons)

1. That the number of Independent Members serving on the Standards Committee be increased from 3 to 4.
2. That the three Independent Members currently serving on the Standards Committee be invited to continue in office beyond May 2003.
3. That the fourth Independent Member be appointed following interview.
4. That a recommendation be made to Annual Council on staggered terms of office for those appointed.



4.0 THIS REPORT HAS THE FOLLOWING IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Aims

The Standards Committee has been set up to oversee the Council's ethical framework and the recruitment of Independent Members is key to this role.

Policy Framework

The membership of the Standard's Committee is contained within the Council's constitution.

Statement by Monitoring Officer

The Local Government Act 2000 stipulates that at least 25% of members on Standards Committees must be independent.

Statement by Director of Finance and E-Government

There are no financial implications contained within this report.

Human Resource IT/Land and Property Implications

There are no implications arising from this report

Wards/Area Boards affected

None

Scrutiny Panel's Interest

None

Consultations

The procedures adopted are those set out in Government Regulations.

Call-in

Not Applicable

Briefings

Executive Members/ Chair		Chief Executive	
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5.0 INTRODUCTION

5.1 The term of office of the three Independent Members of the Standards Committee expires in May 2003. Advertisements were placed in the local press seeking nominations for Independent Members.

5.2 Seven applications have been received including the three current serving members.

6.0 BACKGROUND

6.1 There is a legal requirement for Standards Committees to appoint Independent Members.

6.2 Applications have been invited and a recruitment process will be put in place to determine membership of the Standards Committee from May 2003. This process includes interviews of candidates by the Group Leaders.

6.3 The Standards Board for England recommends that the term of office of independent members should be such as to enable them to develop experience and retain independence. The current members attended their first meetings in January 2002 and it is therefore considered desirable and appropriate that there should be some continuity of membership.

6.4 To develop this, Annual Council will be recommended to alter the membership of the Standards Committee to seven elected and four independent members. In the meantime, the Council is asked to agree a mechanism for facilitating continuity of office amongst the Independent Members.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 It is suggested that the number of Independent Members serving on the Standards Committee be increased from 3 to 4, and the three Independent Members currently serving continue in office beyond May 2003.

7.2 The remaining Independent Member will be recruited following a recruitment and selection process involving the Group Leaders .

7.3 Annual Council will also be asked to agree variable terms of office to arrive at a balance between experience and an opportunity for new independent members to be recruited.

Background documents:

Minutes of Annual Council dated 15 May 2002.

Guidance on standards committees issued by the Standards Board for England

For further information on the details of this report, please contact:
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