

Independent Person (Localism Act 2011) Job Description and Person Specification

June 2026

Job Description

Independent Person (Localism Act 2011)

Purpose of the Role

To act as the Council's appointed Independent Person under the Localism Act 2011, providing independent advice to the Monitoring Officer and, where appropriate, the Standards Committee on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct. The Independent Person helps ensure that the Council's arrangements for maintaining high standards of conduct are fair, transparent, proportionate and consistent.

Main Responsibilities

The Independent Person will:

1. Be consulted by the Monitoring Officer before a decision is made on whether a complaint alleging a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct should be dismissed, investigated or otherwise progressed.
2. Be consulted before the Monitoring Officer reaches a finding following an investigation into an alleged breach of the Code.
3. Provide views to the Standards Committee (or Hearing Panel) where a complaint proceeds to a hearing.
4. Be available to Members who are the subject of a complaint if they wish to seek the Independent Person's views.
5. Offer independent advice while remaining impartial and free from political influence.
6. Read and consider complaint papers and supporting evidence within agreed timescales.
7. Attend meetings (in person or remotely) as reasonably required.
8. Maintain strict confidentiality in relation to complaints and sensitive information.
9. Declare any conflicts of interest and withdraw from consideration where appropriate.
10. Participate in induction and periodic training to remain familiar with:
 - The Localism Act 2011;
 - The Council's Constitution;
 - The Members' Code of Conduct;
 - Relevant case law and guidance;
 - Principles of administrative fairness and natural justice.

Person Specification

Essential

- Demonstrates honesty, integrity and independence.
- Able to analyse complex information and reach balanced conclusions.
- Excellent judgement and objectivity.
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Able to maintain confidentiality.
- Able to work impartially and without political bias.
- Commitment to the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)

Desirable

- Knowledge of local government.
- Experience in law, governance, investigations, complaints handling, regulation, audit, HR, mediation or tribunal work.
- Experience of committee or board environments.
- Understanding of standards in public life.

Eligibility

Applicants must satisfy the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

Applicants must not be:

- A serving councillor or co-opted member of this or another authority.
- An officer or employee of the Council.
- A close friend or relative of a councillor or officer.
- Otherwise disqualified from appointment under the legislation.

Time Commitment

Typically, between 6 and 12 days each year, although this will depend upon the number and complexity of complaints received.

Attendance may include:

- Consultation meetings with the Monitoring Officer.
- Standards Committee meetings.
- Hearings.
- Training and development sessions.

Remuneration

Annual allowance of £[insert], together with reimbursement of approved travel and subsistence expenses in accordance with the Council's policy.

Reporting

The Independent Person is appointed by Full Council and works independently while providing advice to the Monitoring Officer and Standards Committee. The role does not form part of the Council's staffing establishment.