Audit and Standards Sub Board - Independent Person

Responsible to: The Council

Liaison with: Monitoring Officer, members of the Audit and Standards Sub Board, officers and members of the Borough Council, and relevant key stakeholders.

1. To assist the Council in promoting high standards of conduct by elected and co-opted members of Gosport Borough Council and in particular, to uphold the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council and the seven principles of public office, namely selflessness, honesty, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness and leadership.

2. To be consulted by the Council through the Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services Officer and/or the Audit and Standards Sub Board before it makes a decision on an investigated allegation and to be available to attend meetings for this purpose.

3. To be available for consultation by the Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services Officer and/or the Audit and Standards Sub Board before a decision is taken as to whether to investigate a complaint or to seek local resolution of the same.

4. To be available for consultation by any elected member who is the subject of a Code of Conduct complaint.

5. To develop a sound understanding of the ethical framework as it operates within Gosport Borough Council and to be available to attend and advise the Audit and Standards Sub Board on such matters.

6. To participate in training to develop skills, knowledge and experience.

7. To attend training events organised and promoted by the Council's Audit and Standards Sub Board.

8. To act as advocate and ambassador for the Borough Council, adopting, applying and promoting ethical behaviour, as per the Code of Conduct.

Background Information:

The way that the Borough Council will deal with conduct complaints about its elected members follows the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

The Act provides that the Council must appoint at least one Independent Person to assist in discharging these responsibilities.

Under this Act, the Borough Council is responsible for deciding how to deal with standards issues at a local level, including adopting its own local code and determining arrangements for dealing with complaints. Such arrangements are set out on Gosport Borough Council's website at the following link:

https://www.gosport.gov.uk/article/1458/Complaints-about-Councillors

Selection Criteria - Skills & Competencies

The Independent Person will have:

- a keen interest in standards in public life.
- a wish to serve the local community and uphold local democracy.
- the ability to be objective, independent and impartial.
- sound decision making skills
- leadership qualities, particularly in respect of exercising judgement.

The Independent Person will:

- be a person in whose impartiality and integrity the public can have confidence.
- understand and comply with confidentiality requirements.
- have a demonstrable interest in local issues.
- have an awareness of the importance of ethical behaviours.
- be a good communicator

Desirable additional criteria:

- working knowledge/experience of local government or other public service and/or of large complex organisations and awareness of and sensitivity to the political process.

- knowledge and understanding of judicial/quasi-judicial or complaints processes.

Interviews: Interviews for the Independent Person are carried out by Panel. Panel consists of the Monitoring Officer, Audit and Standards Sub Boards' Chair and Vice-Chair and any others as required (Democratic Services). The Panel decision goes to Audit and Standards Sub Board for approval. The decision to then appoint goes to a meeting of the Full Council.