

**REPORT OF ADMINISTRATION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER AND
DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER**

SUBJECT: COMPOSITION OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Purpose of Report

1. To appoint a Member to serve on the Standards Committee, and
2. To consider increasing the composition of the Authority's Standards Committee to seven Members by increasing the number of Independent Members to four.

Introduction/Background

All relevant authorities in Wales are required to establish a Standards Committee to safeguard standards of conduct and propriety within their respective authorities.

The Standards Committee (Wales) Regulations 2001 state that the composition of a Standards Committee shall comprise not less than five and no more than nine Members (Regulation 3). In addition, where a Committee is of even number, at least half of the Members must be Independent Members (Regulation 5).

The Authority's Standards Committee comprises six Members, three of whom are Independent Members.

Quorum

Regulation 24 states that no business can be transacted at a meeting unless at least three Members are present (including the Chair) and that, of those three, at least half (including the Chair) are Independent Members.

The current situation could lead us to a scenario whereby, if one of the Independent Members was not available for a meeting, we would be unable to proceed as there would be more Authority Members than Independent Members, rendering the Committee inquorate.

To prevent such a scenario from occurring, there are two options available:

- A. to increase the membership of the Standards Committee to seven and appoint an additional Independent Member, or
- B. to decrease the membership to five (the minimum number possible) and decrease the Authority's members to two.

In my view, the more robust option would be to increase the membership of the Standards Committee to seven and appoint an additional Independent Member.

Chair of the Standards Committee

The Chair's term of office has now expired and I would like to take the opportunity to thank her for her commitment to the work of the Standards Committee over the last

five years. As a result, we will be advertising for a new Independent Member in the New Year to take her place. Were Members to agree to increase the membership of the Standards Committee, then we could advertise for two new Independent Members at the same time.

Financial considerations

The resource implications associated with the Panel's determinations can be met from existing budgets.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. To appoint a Member to serve on the Standards Committee;**
- 2. To increase the membership of the Standards Committee to seven by increasing the number of Independent Members to four, and**
- 3. To advertise for two new Independent Members at the earliest opportunity.**

Background Documents

The Standards Committee (Wales) Regulations 2001

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