

City of York Council

Independent Person Recruitment Information Pack

2022

Appointment of Independent Person – Background Information

Independent Persons

City of York Council is required by law to appoint at least one Independent Person to help promote and maintain high standards of conduct. The main part of the role is to assist with complaints about the behavior of elected and co-opted members of City of York Council and members of the Town and Parish Councils within the City.

City of York Council has appointed 2 Independent Persons and the current vacancy arises due to the expiry of the term of office of one of the Independent Persons. The Council is also looking to add to the pool of 2 Independent Persons to provide additional resilience within the Joint Standards Committee.

Code of Conduct

Every Local Authority in England is required to adopt a code of conduct to regulate the behavior of its own councilors. The current code of conduct (which is under review) can be found on the Council's website (see link below) and a copy is attached to this information pack.

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s155872/Member%20Code%20of%20Conduct%202021.pdf>

Each Town and Parish Council in York has their own code of conduct, which can be found on the specific Town or Parish Council's website.

Complaints Procedure

City of York Council is required by law to have arrangements in place to deal with complaints against its own members and those councilors in Parish and Town Councils in the City. The complaints procedure for all complaints in York is attached to this information pack.

The Independent Persons deal with complaints on a case by case basis as notified by the Monitoring Officer. To assist applicants, the following documents are attached:

- The City of York Council Code of Conduct;
- Complaints Procedure;
- Independent Person Role Specification;

- Independent Person Protocol;
- Application Form.

Eligibility for Appointment

A person cannot be appointed as an Independent Person if they are or were within a period of five years prior to the appointment:

- (a) A member, or co-opted member or officer of City of York Council,
- (b) A member, or co-opted member or officer of a Town or Parish Council within the area of City of York Council,

or, if they have a relative or close friend of a person in (a) or (b) above – see below.

A relative is defined as:

- (a) The applicant's spouse or civil partner;
- (b) Any person with whom the applicant is living as if they were spouse or civil partners;
- (c) The applicant's grandparent;
- (d) Any person who is a lineal descendent of the applicant's grandparent;
- (e) A parent, brother, sister or child of anyone in paragraphs (a) or (b);
- (f) The spouse or civil partner of anyone within paragraphs (c), (d) or (e);
or
- (g) Any person living with a person within paragraphs (c), (d) or (e) as if they were spouse or civil partner to that person.

Information about the Role

The Independent Person will need to be contactable at all times during normal working hours by telephone or by email and will need to be available to attend hearings which may be held in the day time and at relatively short notice.

The Independent Person will be invited to attend any meeting of the Joint Standards Committee which is considering an allegation of a breach of the code of conduct. As well as dealing with complaints, the Committee meets approximately five times each year to undertake its general role of supporting the achievement of high ethical standards. The Committee usually invites the Independent Persons to attend those meetings.

This is not a job vacancy and should you be appointed as an Independent Person you will not be an employee of the Council. This role does not attract any financial recompense, other than reimbursement of necessary travel expenses.

The term of office will be for a fixed term as notified to the Independent Person on appointment and will be subject to the Independent Person maintaining high standards of personal conduct. The Council may terminate an appointment at any time.

Completion and Submission of Application Form

The selection criteria for the role is set out in the role description. Please ensure that you carefully demonstrate in your application form how you meet the criteria, as this will be used to assist in the short-listing process.

Applications will be assessed by reference to your completed application form and, if shortlisted, by interview. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend for interview. The successful applicant will receive specific training to enable them to undertake the role effectively.

Applications must be received by midnight on 30th May 2022

Interviews will be held during the week commencing 6th June 2022