

INFORMATION PACK

FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF

INDEPENDENT PERSON



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Following the resignation of Cambridge City Council's Independent Person, Cambridge City Council is seeking to appoint a new Independent Person to assist in maintaining and promoting its high ethical standards. This role was created by the Localism Act 2011 which requires all local authorities to adopt a code of conduct for their elected members; and to appoint at least one independent person to assist the Council in dealing with complaints that the code of conduct may have been breached.

The City Council has an Deputy Independent Person who can act as Independent Person in the event that the person appointed is incapacitated or otherwise unable to act; for instance, by reason of a conflict of interest.

A fixed allowance of £1000 is payable together with reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses.

Full details of the role and responsibilities of the Independent Person are included in this Information Pack.

The Council intends to confirm the appointment of the Independent Person at the Council meeting on 22 February 2018 following the consideration and recommendation of the civic affairs committee which will meet on 14 February 2018.

INDEPENDENT PERSON

Closing Date: 12 January 2018

If you have a keen interest in promoting high ethical standards in local government, you may be interested in the opportunity join us as an Independent Person to assist our organisation in maintaining and promoting its own ethical standards.

The Localism Act 2011 saw the introduction of a code of conduct for elected members and your fair and impartial judgment as Independent Person would be sought and taken into account if the Council has received an allegation that the code of conduct has been breached. You will be encouraged to develop and apply knowledge of the codes of conduct and provide a view on the conduct of Cambridge City councillors from an external perspective, which reflects the expectations and views of the local community.

The Civic Affairs Committee meets approximately 4 times a year to deal with complaints, support the achievement of our high ethical standards and to provide scrutiny to the Council's annual complaints report; which shows the key themes of complaints and the actions being taken to learn and incorporate lessons. As our Independent person, the Committee will invite you to attend such meetings and would require your attendance at any meeting of the Committee which is considering an allegation of a breach of the code of conduct.

As part of the position, you will be encouraged to acquire some understanding of the work of the City Council and how it operates. Our democratic processes and culture reflect a city and a populace that values open public debate and your understanding of the accountability and objectivity demanded of us will help you to apply your logical reasoning, open-mindedness and impartiality. You should be prepared to undertake training and participate in training events organised by the Council to promote awareness of the Code of Conduct as required.

A fixed allowance of £1000 is payable together with reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses.

For more information about the role or for an Information Pack, please contact Claire Tunnicliffe (Committee Manager) on 01223 457135 or via email at: claire.tunnicliffe@cambridge.gov.uk.

ROLE DESCRIPTION



Responsible to: The Council

Liaison with: Monitoring Officer; Democratic Services Manager; members of the Civic Affairs Committee and other Committees if and when necessary; Officers and members of the City Council and key stakeholders within the community.

1. If the Council has decided to investigate an allegation that the code of conduct has been breached then the views of the independent person must be sought, and taken into account, before the Council makes its decision on any such allegation. The Council may also seek the views of the independent person in relation to allegations where no decision to investigate has been made. In addition any Councillor, who has been complained about may seek the views of the independent person(s).
2. It is anticipated that the views of the independent person(s) will usually be sought by the Monitoring Officer by e-mail but, on occasions, contact may be by telephone or in face to face meetings. It is also anticipated that local procedures will be adopted requiring the independent person to be consulted on any allegation received not just those which have been investigated.
3. An independent person is likely to be invited to attend any meeting of the Civic Affairs Committee which is considering an allegation of a breach of the code of conduct. As well as dealing with complaints the Committee meets approximately four times each year to undertake its general role of supporting the achievement of high ethical standards. The Committee will invite the independent person(s) to attend those meetings.
4. The Independent Person will be encouraged to develop and apply knowledge of the codes of conduct, and to analyse and to exercise fair and impartial judgment on conduct issues, and to set high standards of ethical behaviour, and develop a sound understanding of the ethical framework.
5. The Independent Person will be expected to provide a view on the conduct of Cambridge City councillors from an external perspective, reflecting the expectations and views of the local community on ethical standards.
6. The Independent Person will be encouraged to acquire some understanding of the work of the City Council and how it operates, and must be prepared to undertake training and also to participate in training events organised by the Council to promote awareness of the Code of Conduct.

7. Support will be provided by the Council's Monitoring Officer and/ or Democratic Services Manager who will arrange any necessary training and provide such information and assistance as is necessary to enable the Independent Person to perform the role effectively.

8. The Independent Person will not be an employee of the Council. 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 City Council may terminate an appointment at any time.

ESSENTIAL QUALITIES

1. To demonstrate a keen interest in promoting high ethical standards in local government, and to have a general understanding of the principles behind the members' Code of Conduct.
2. To have good communication and interpersonal skills, and to be able to operate with tact and diplomacy.
3. To be able to demonstrate an understanding of the standards of accountability and objectivity demanded of public authorities, and the continuous scrutiny under which they are placed.
4. To be able to use logical reasoning and bring qualities of open-mindedness and impartiality.
5. To be able to deal with substantial documentation and to analyse, interpret and absorb information and evidence effectively and quickly.
6. To understand and comply with confidentiality requirements
7. To be a person of good standing in whose impartiality and integrity elected members and the general public can have confidence.
8. To be able to attend meetings and be available for telephone or email consultation, sometimes at short notice.
9. Not to be a member of any political party or have a public profile in relation to political activities.
10. To be willing to disclose to the Council any matter which, if it became public, might cause the Council to reconsider the appointment.

DESIRABLE QUALITIES

1. To have had involvement in or knowledge of public authorities, voluntary organisations, commercial institutions, professional or employee organisations or other similar activities.

APPLICATION FOR THE POSITION OF INDEPENDENT PERSON

Individuals who wish to be considered for appointment as the Independent Person at Cambridge City Council are requested to provide the following information to support their application. All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be used for the purposes of selection. Please feel free to use a separate continuation page if you wish to expand upon your answer to any question outlined below.

1. Personal Details

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

National Insurance:

CONTACT DETAILS:

Mobile Phone Number:

Daytime Phone Number:

Email Address:

2. QUALIFICATIONS

(Please list in particular any qualification which you feel are relevant to the position of Independent Person)

Subject	Qualification	Notes

3. SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE

(Please give a brief account of your experience including career, public and voluntary work together with the nature of your current or most recent occupation).

4. RELEVANT EXPERTISE AND SKILLS

(Please outline briefly any knowledge or expertise which you believe would be particularly relevant to your role as an Independent Person having regard to the selection criteria and role description)

5. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Why do you wish to be considered for appointment as Independent Person and what particular attributes do you believe you would bring to the role?

6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide any additional information you may wish to give in support of your application:

7. REFERENCES

References will be taken up for all applicants who are invited for interview

REFERENCE 1		REFERENCE 2	
Name:		Name:	
Address:		Address:	
Tel No:		Tel No:	
Email:		Email:	

I wish to apply to be an Independent Person. In submitting this application, I declare that:

EITHER

- I am not and have not during the past five years been a Member or Officer of the City Council.
- I am not related to, or a close friend of, any Member or Officer of the City Council.
- I am not currently an Officer or Member of any other relevant authority (this includes parish, district, county and unitary councils and Police and Fire Authorities).
- I am not actively engaged in local party political activity. *

Signed:		Date:	
---------	--	-------	--

Please return this application form by **12 January 2018** addressed to:

Claire Tunnicliffe
Committee Manager
Cambridge City Council
PO Box 700
Cambridge CB1 0JH

Or send the completed form to claire.tunnicliffe@cambridge.gov.uk