

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON

The City of Lincoln Council is looking to appoint one person to serve as an Independent Person (and two reserves who may be called upon from time to time) to support in its arrangements for dealing with Standards matters within the City of Lincoln, Lincolnshire.

The appointment of the Independent Person is a decision of full Council and the term of appointment is from 1 July 2012 until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2013. Training will be provided prior to commencement of the post.

The Localism Act 2011 places a duty on the Council to promote and maintain high standards of conduct for elected and co-opted members. This includes the requirement to have a Code of Conduct with which members must comply.

The Act also requires that the Council adopt arrangements for dealing with complaints on breaches of the Code of Conduct by the City of Lincoln Council members. This must include provision for the appointment of at least one Independent Person.

The Act states that the Independent Person will have the following functions:

- They must be consulted by the Council before it makes a finding as to whether a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct following investigation or decides on action to be taken in respect of that member;
- They may be consulted by the Council in respect of a standards complaint at any other stage; and
- They may be consulted by a member or co-opted member of the City of Lincoln Council against whom a complaint has been made.

The essential qualities for the positions are that you should:

- be over 18 years of age
- have a commitment to public service
- have personal integrity and a commitment to upholding high standards
- be independent and impartial
- be able to critically assess written and oral evidence to reach balanced and objective decisions
- possess tact, diplomacy and good communication skills
- demonstrate excellent listening, problem solving and evaluation skills
- be reliable and committed
- have the ability and willingness to work with other members of other councils, their committees/panels and officers where necessary

It would also be helpful to have knowledge of how local government operates, awareness of the role of elected members, and a general understanding of the principles of the members' Code of Conduct and Standards Regime.

It is important that you are independent of the Council. Therefore you should not, pursuant to Section 28(8) of the Localism Act 2011:

- be, or have been within the last five years, an elected or co-opted member or an officer of the City of Lincoln Council

- be, or have been within the last five years, an elected or co-opted member of any committee or sub-committee of the City of Lincoln Council;
- be, a relative or close friend of a current elected or co-opted member or officer of the City of Lincoln Council .

The City of Lincoln Council reserves the right to remove an Independent Person from his/her post if their independence is in anyway compromised, and/or they bring the reputation of the Council into disrepute.

Allowance and Expenses

The Independent Person will receive an annual allowance of £300 per annum, payable monthly.

ROLE PROFILE

Responsible to: The Monitoring Officer and the Council.

Liaison with: Members and co-opted Members and Officers of the City of Lincoln Council.

Responsibilities:

1. To attend and participate in meetings of Standards Committees and any sub-committees or associated meetings in an advisory capacity.
2. To provide advice to Members and Co-opted Members about whom a conduct complaint has been received and specifically to discharge the functions detailed in Section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011.
3. To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members.
4. To develop and apply knowledge of the Code of Conduct in relation to any and all matters relating to standards, including the assessment and determination of allegations of member misconduct under the Code of Conduct.
5. To analyse and exercise fair and impartial judgement and decision making on conduct issues.
6. To consult, liaise and maintain a professional working relationship with the council's Monitoring Officer, his / her appointed deputies and other officers of the council
7. To provide a view on the governance of the Council from an external perspective that will better enable the Council to assess conduct and standards issues.
8. To develop a firm understanding of the standards and wider governance framework within which the Council operates.
9. To participate in training events relevant to the work of standards within the Council.
10. To attend meetings of the Council when required and other functions in order to raise the profile of standards within the City of Lincoln and Lincolnshire.
11. To participate in any forum established for Independent Persons.
12. In relation to 1 and 2 above to assist neighbouring principal councils on an ad hoc basis, if necessary.
13. To undertake such other responsibilities as the Monitoring Officer considers reasonably commensurate with the position.