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## Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance)

### Council

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Subject: Appointment of Chair of Standards Committee

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#### Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

#### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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### Executive Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to outline the process that has been followed to select a new Chair of the Standards Committee, and to recommend that full Council appoint Mr. Gordon Tollefson as the Chair of the Standards Committee for a term of one year beginning at the Annual Meeting in 2010.
2. The current Chair of the Leeds Standards Committee, Mr. Mike Wilkinson is coming to the end of his second term and will stand down at the Annual Meeting in 2010.
3. Therefore all Independent Members on the Standards Committee (including the Reserve Independent Member) were asked whether they wished to express an interest in the role in November 2009.
4. A panel was established with terms of reference being to make a recommendation of appointment as Chair of the Standards Committee to full Council. This recommendation is for an appointment of a term of one year. The panel was comprised of the Leaders of the three largest political groups (or their nominees) and the Monitoring Officer was an advisor to the Panel.
5. Following their discussions with Mr. Tollefson the panel decided to recommend his appointment for a term of one year beginning at the Annual Meeting in 2010.
6. Members of the Council are asked to appoint Mr. Tollefson as the Chair of the Standards Committee for a term of one year with effect from the Annual Meeting in 2010.

## **1.0 Purpose Of This Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the process that has been followed to select a new Chair of the Standards Committee, and to recommend that full Council appoint Mr. Gordon Tollefson as the Chair of the Standards Committee for a term of one year beginning at the Annual Meeting in 2010.

## **2.0 Background Information**

- 2.1 Independent Members of the Leeds Standards Committee shall not serve more than two terms of office. The current Chair of the Leeds Standards Committee, Mr. Mike Wilkinson is coming to the end of his second term and will stand down at the Annual Meeting in 2010.
- 2.2 Mr. Wilkinson has been the Chair of the Leeds Standards Committee since the Committee was established in 2000. Independent Members of the Leeds Standards Committee shall not, as per article 9.3.5.5 of the Constitution, serve more than two terms. Mr. Wilkinson has served two terms of office and will retire in May 2010.
- 2.3 Article 9.3.5.7 stipulates that the Chair of the Standards Committee must be appointed from the Independent Members appointed to it. The appointment must be made by full Council.
- 2.4 All Independent Members on the Standards Committee (including the Reserve Independent Member) were asked whether they wished to express an interest in the role in November 2009.
- 2.5 A panel was established with terms of reference being to make a recommendation of appointment as Chair of the Standards Committee to full Council. This recommendation is for an appointment of a term of one year. The panel was comprised of the Leaders of the three largest political groups (or their nominees) and the Monitoring Officer was an advisor to the Panel.

## **3.0 Main Issues**

- 3.1 Only one Independent Member decided to express an interest in the role of Chair of the Standards Committee. Mr. Gordon Tollefson is currently the Reserve Independent Member of the Standards Committee, but will become a full Independent Member at the Annual Meeting in 2010, as per the decision of the full Council on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2009.

### Previous experience and skills

- 3.2 As a Reserve Member, Mr. Tollefson has not been able to Chair any Assessment or Review Sub-Committee meetings, however he has attended training on local assessment, and is invited to observe Review Sub-Committee meetings.
- 3.3 Mr. Tollefson retired from the NHS in January 2006 where he worked as a Senior Ambulance Service Manager. In 2007 and 2008 Mr. Tollefson undertook some part time project work for St John Ambulance (South & West Yorkshire) in addition to being a senior volunteer with that organisation.
- 3.4 Mr. Tollefson has served as a Magistrate in Leeds since 1994 and chairs Courts on a regular basis. In 2008 Mr. Tollefson was appointed by the Ministry of Justice to

the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee for Leeds, which is the body that handles all matters relating to standards, discipline and governance within the Leeds Magistrates' Courts.

- 3.5 Since retiring, Mr. Tollefson has joined the Board of a large Practice Based Commissioning Group of General Practitioners in East and South Leeds, and has recently been invited by HM Lord Lieutenant for West Yorkshire to serve as one of her Deputies. Mr. Tollefson was also a member of the Leeds City Council Independent Remuneration Panel until he was appointed to the Standards Committee (he had to resign as the relevant Regulations prevent a co-opted Member of the Council being on the Independent Remuneration Panel).

#### Recommendation of the panel

- 3.6 The panel held an informal discussion with Mr. Tollefson regarding the role on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009.
- 3.7 Following their discussion with Mr. Tollefson, the panel decided to recommend his appointment for a term of one year beginning at the Annual Meeting in 2010.
- 3.8 The full Council are being asked to consider this recommendation now in order to allow the Chair designate to shadow Mr. Wilkinson over the remaining months of his chairmanship. This is especially important given the Mr. Tollefson has only been a Reserve Independent Member of the Standards Committee since May 2009.
- 3.9 Further the panel recommended that a report be prepared, for consideration of the General Purposes Committee before the end of the municipal year, to present options for the future (from 2011 onwards) appointment to the position of Chair to the Standards Committee. It is anticipated that any changes proposed by General Purposes Committee may require subsequent amendments to Article 9 of the Constitution. If this is the case Full Council will be asked to approve these changes in due course.

#### **4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance**

- 4.1 The proposals contained in this report are informed by, and compliant with, Article 9 of the Council's Constitution. The proposals are also in accordance with Regulations governing the operation of local authority Standards Committees.

#### **5.0 Legal And Resource Implications**

- 5.1 The Chair of the Standards Committee is entitled to a special responsibility allowance of £7,190.80 plus travel and subsistence expenses, in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme.

#### **6.0 Conclusions**

- 6.1 Independent Members of the Leeds Standards Committee shall not serve more than two terms of office. The current Chair of the Leeds Standards Committee, Mr. Mike Wilkinson is coming to the end of his second term and will stand down at the Annual Meeting in 2010.

- 6.2 Article 9.3.5.7 stipulates that the Chair of the Standards Committee must be appointed from the Independent Members appointed to it. The appointment must be made by full Council. All Independent Members on the Standards Committee (including the Reserve Independent Member) were asked whether they wished to express an interest in the role in November 2009.
- 6.3 A panel was established with terms of reference being to make a recommendation of appointment as Chair of the Standards Committee to full Council. This recommendation is for an appointment of a term of one year. The panel was comprised of the Leaders of the three largest political groups (or their nominees) and the Monitoring Officer was an advisor to the Panel.
- 6.4 Following their discussion with Mr. Tollefson the panel decided to recommend his appointment for a term of one year beginning at the Annual Meeting in 2010.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

- 7.1 Members of the Council are asked to appoint Mr. Tollefson as the Chair of the Standards Committee for a term of one year with effect from the Annual Meeting in 2010.
- 7.2 Members of Council are also asked to note the intention for further consideration, by the General Purposes Committee, of the arrangements for the future appointment to the position of Chair to the Standards Committee.

## Background Documents

Minute 10 of the Council meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2009

Article 9 – Governance Committees, Part 2 of the Constitution

Members' Allowances Scheme, Part 6 of the Constitution