
**MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
REPORT FOR RESOLUTION**

Report to: Constitutional and Nomination Committee – 13 July 2011

Subject: Extension to Term of Appointment of Independent Member of the Standards Committee

Report of: The City Solicitor

Purpose of the Report:

To provide the Committee with background regarding the progress of the Localism Bill and proposed abolition of the current standards regime and to seek the extension of Amanda Isles' term of appointment as an independent member of the Standards Committee for a period of one year.

Recommendations:

To recommend that the Council extend Amanda Isles' term of appointment as an independent member of the Standards Committee for a period of one year, expiring 9 July 2012.

Financial Consequences for Revenue Budget:

None.

Financial Consequences for the Capital Budget:

None.

Wards Affected:

All.

Implications for:

Antipoverty	Equal Opportunities	Environment	Employment
No	No	No	No

Contact Officers:

Susan Orrell, City Solicitor – 234 3087, s.orrell@manchester.gov.uk
Stephen Hollard, Senior Legal Officer – 234 3336, s.hollard@manchester.gov.uk

Background Documents:

The Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2009.

Standards Board Guidance – “The Role and Make-up of Standards Committees.”

Clauses 15-21 (inclusive) and Schedule 4 of the Localism Bill (as brought from the House of Commons to the House of Lords on 23 May 2011).

“Abolition of the Standards Board Regime”, guidance note produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government, December 2010.

“Terms of Appointment of Independent Members” – Report of the City Solicitor to the Standards Committee, 27 June 2011.

Background

1. The Localism Bill currently before Parliament provides for the abolition of the statutory standards regime. While the Bill provides for the adoption of a voluntary local code of conduct, at present it remains uncertain what the future role of standards committees will be in respect of such a code. The role of independent members of standards committees similarly remains unclear. Until the proposed changes are clarified and implemented it is necessary for the Standards Committee to retain a sufficient number of independent members to enable it to exercise its functions during the pre-enactment and transitional periods.

Terms of Independent Members of Standards Committee

2. The Standards Committee currently has three independent members. The terms of appointment of two of them are due to expire on 9 July 2012, and the third, Amanda Isles, expires on 9 July 2011.
3. Amanda Isles has served as an independent member of the Standard's Committee since 9 July 2008. Standards for England's guidance “The role and Make-up of Standards Committees” recommends that:
 - No independent member should serve for more than two terms; and
 - The length of such terms should be 4 years.

The proposed extension would mean that Amanda Isles will be serving a 4 year term of appointment.

4. The Standards Committee, at its meeting on 27 June 2011, resolved to request that the Constitutional and Nomination Committee recommend to Council that Amanda Isles' term of appointment as an independent member of the Standards Committee be extended for a period of one year, expiring 9 July 2012. It is expected that such an extension would ensure that the terms of all independent members would cover the pre-enactment and transitional periods in respect of the changes to the standards regime. The Committee is therefore asked to make the above mentioned recommendation to Council.