

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Constitutional and Nomination Committee – 4 October 2023
Council - 4 October 2023.

Subject: Appointment of an additional Independent Person for
consideration of complaints against Members,

Report of: The City Solicitor

Summary

To enable the Constitutional and Nomination Committee to consider the appointment of an additional Independent Person to assist the Council's Monitoring Officer in dealing with allegations that members of the Council have acted in breach of the Council's Code of Conduct.

Recommendation

Constitution and Nomination Committee:

The Committee is asked to support the recommendation that the Council appoint William Goh as an Independent Person for period of four years starting 4 October 2023.

Council:

The Council is asked to agree to appoint William Goh as an Independent Person for period of four years starting 4 October 2023.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

None

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments
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none

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Not directly applicable
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Not directly applicable
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Not directly applicable
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Not directly applicable
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Not directly applicable

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The Council provides an allowance to its independent persons of £1,910 per annum and £119 for each day attended at a Hearing Panel as a Panel Member.

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

None.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Section 28 (7) of the Localism Act 2011 requires all English local authorities to appoint Independent Persons (IPs) to help them to discharge their duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by their Councillors and co-opted members and any Parish Councillors.

1.2 The main roles of the Independent Person are to:

- assist the Council in promoting high standards of conduct by elected and co-opted members
- be consulted by the Council's Monitoring Officer and/or the Standards Committee before a decision is made following the investigation of a complaint. The Independent Person may also be consulted before a decision is taken as to whether to investigate a complaint or whether the complaint should be resolved by an alternative means
- be available for consultation by an elected or co-opted member who is the subject of a standards complaint

1.3 The Council has delegated to the Standards Committee the power to deal with matters of conduct and ethical standards, and the promoting and maintaining of high standards of conduct by Councillors, Co-opted Members and church and parent governor representatives.

1.4 The Council currently has 2 Independent Persons whose terms of office were extended by the Council to 18 November 2026 as recommended by the Standards Committee at its meeting in June 2022 and reported to the Constitution and Nominations Committee in July 2022. The Standards Committee in addition to supporting the extension of the term of office of the current 2 Independent Persons endorsed the recruitment of an additional Independent Person to support on dealing with Complaints relating to Members.

1.5 An IP must be a person who has applied for the post following advertisement of a vacancy for the post and appointed by a positive vote from a majority of all the Members of the Council at a meeting of the full Council.

1.6 The Council delegated to the Monitoring Officer the making of arrangements for the recruitment and selection of Independent Persons, whose appointment must be approved by a majority of the Members of the Council in accordance with Section 28(8)(c)(ii) of the Localism Act.

1.7 Recruitment has now taken place for this additional Independent Person, and the Monitoring Officer has updated the members of the Standards Committee that following the taking place of interviews she will be recommending to Council the appointment of William Goh to this role. Mr Goh is currently an Independent Person for another Council, a role he has held since 2018. In interview he impressed with his suitability, experience and understanding of the role

2.0 Recommendation

The recommendation appears at the top of this report.