

INDEPENDENT PERSON: PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Independent Person will possess the following attributes, to be assessed through an application and interview process:

- Personal integrity and honesty.
- A keen interest and commitment to maintaining high standards in public life.
- A wish to serve the local community and uphold local democracy.
- An interest in and awareness of the functions of local government relating to ethical governance, in particular the role of elected Members and the relevant Code of Conduct.
- Independence, impartiality and experience of exercising sound, objective judgements in relation to complex matters
- Excellent questioning, analytical and evaluation skills in order to advise whether a breach of the Code of Conduct or complaint should be investigated.
- A commitment to promoting equality and an awareness of the issues affecting a diverse community.
- Excellent communication skills in particular the ability to provide clear rationale for advice and to explain decision making when required.
- Experience of dealing with private and sensitive issues, exercising discretion and maintaining confidentiality of information received.
- Flexibility to deal with urgent requests.
- Be aged 18 or over and with a mature and sound temperament.

Some of the fundamental skills and qualities are required for the following reasons:

Honesty and integrity This role carries a high level of moral responsibility and the successful appointments will be placed in a position of high regard and trust within the authority. The Independent Persons may, due to the nature of the role, be privy to sensitive, private or personal information which must be treated in confidence. Any information disseminated to an Independent Person in relation to an allegation of breach will be entirely confidential and there will be a fundamental expectation that the matters discussed are not disclosed further. The successful candidates will be able to evidence that they are able to be placed in a position of trust, handle confidential information with integrity and exercise discretion when discussing matters relating to the authority.

Fair mindedness and impartiality The Independent Persons will have a responsibility to consider the facts of any case and offer fair, impartial views to the Monitoring Officer about an allegation of breach of the Code of Conduct. Applicants will be able to evidence the ability to exercise sound objective judgments, willingness to thoroughly challenge and impartially assess complaints, reports or defences; and act without bias when forming their views.

Good communication skills and an enquiring mind - The Independent Persons will attend Standards Committees and Full Council as necessary and will be expected to fully participate in relevant discussions at those meetings and good communication skills are essential. The allegations of breaches, which the Independent Persons will be consulted about may be complex, involve numerous pieces of evidence, and involve a degree of investigation by the Council's delegated Monitoring Officer. Applicants will be able to evidence an enquiring mind and be adept at analysing information and formulating views accordingly.

Commitment and reliability The role is expected to be a long-term commitment. Whilst the Council reserves the right to terminate the appointment (should, for example, an individual prove to be unsuitable), it is expected that the post-holders will provide a commitment to undertake the role long-term.

Previous experience and knowledge The successful candidates should be able to evidence the attainment of the aforementioned skills and qualities in a similar role at another local authority, auditing body, legal institution, or public or private organisation.

They should also need to show a commitment to upholding high ethical standards, and demonstrate an understanding of governance matters, such as the Council's Constitution, and of the work of the Council.

The Independent Person must not be:

This role is legally restricted as detailed below Sections 28(8)(a) and (b) of the Localism Act 2011 stipulates that a person is not independent (and cannot therefore be considered for appointment) if the person is or has been within the last five years:

- A Member, co-opted member or employee of the Tameside MBC or Mossley Parish Council or have held such a post within the previous 5 years.
- A relative or close friend of such a person.
- A member of a political party or involved in the management of a local lobbying group.