

By: Gary Cooke, Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services

To: County Council – 14 July 2016

Subject: Appointment of the Independent Person

Classification: Unrestricted

Previous Pathway of Paper: Discussion with Group Leaders.  
Selection and Member Service Committee – 23 June 2016

Future Pathway of Paper: County Council

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Summary: In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the County Council is required to appoint an Independent Person with whom the Monitoring Officer can engage on alleged breaches of the Kent Member Code of Conduct.

Recommendation: The Selection and Member Services Committee recommend to the County Council the re-appointment of Michael George as the Independent Person for the Members' Code of Conduct for a further four year term from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2020

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires that the County Council to appoint an Independent Person to whom the Monitoring Officer can seek advice when he is in receipt of an alleged breach of the Kent Member Code of Conduct.

1.2 The legislation came into operation on 1 July 2012 just a few days after it was published. As a consequence the County Council approved at its meeting in September 2012 the appointment of Mr Michael George retrospectively for a four year term expiring 30 June 2016.

## **2. Reappointment of Mr George**

2.1 Following a discussion with the Leaders of political Groups, it was their unanimous view to recommend to the Selection and Member Services Committee the re-appointment of Mr George for a further term of office as the Independent Person for the four year period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2020.

2.2 The Selection and Member Services Committee on 23 June endorsed the views of the Leaders. The Committee agreed unanimously to recommend to the County Council the reappointment of Mr George.

2.3 Attached as an Appendix is a short biography of Mr George.

2.4 Mr George has said verbally that he would be delighted to accept the appointment for a further term of four years.

2.5 The remuneration for this post is a £500 annual retainer (payable over 12 months) plus a daily rate of £100 (pro rata for part of a day) when required to undertake any duties, together with travel expenses at the same rate as for elected Members (currently 45p per mile)

### **3. Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority**

The Committee is reminded that the County Council works in co-operation with the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority. Should Mr George not be available or have a conflict of interest the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority Independent Person Mrs Janet Waghorn would act. The Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority have reappointed Mrs Waghorn for a further four years.

### **4. Recommendation**

The County Council is recommended to reappoint Michael George as the Independent Person for the Member Code of Conduct for the four year term 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2020.

Report Author:

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Background documents - none

## **APPENDIX**

### **Michael Edward George**

Michael is a retired Solicitor and Crown Prosecutor. Michael qualified as a Solicitor in 1977 and following four years in local government he moved into private practice where he specialised in civil and criminal litigation. In 1990 Michael joined the Crown Prosecution Service retiring in 2011.

Michael served for two years as an independent Member of a District Council Standards Committee.