

**REPORT OF CITY SOLICITOR**

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**TO  
COUNCIL**

**ON  
18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**

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**TITLE:** Appointment of Independent Chair and Independent Member of the Standards Committee

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Council is recommended to:

1. Note the report.
  2. Approve the appointment of Mr Jonathan Storey as Independent Chair of the Standards Committee for an initial term of four years.
  3. Thank Ms Jackson as outgoing Independent Chair for her commitment to the role and for her service and contribution to maintaining high standards of conduct for elected members at Salford City Council.
  4. Note that a further advertising and recruitment exercise for the role of Independent Member of the Standards Committee will be initiated to allow a recommendation to be presented for approval at a future meeting of full Council.
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The purpose of this report is to update full Council on the recent advertising and recruitment exercise for an Independent Chair and an Independent Member of the Council's Standards Committee and to seek the approval of full Council to appoint Mr Jonathan Storey as Independent Chair.

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**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Council Constitution  
Standards Committee Report/Minutes 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018  
Standards Committee Report 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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**KEY DECISION: NO**

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**DETAILS:**

The membership of the Council's Standards Committee is approved at Annual Council in line with the committee's composition which is set out in Article 9 of our constitution as follows:-

'Eight councillors allocated to the political groups on the council in accordance with the principles of political balance.

Two co-opted independent members, who are not councillors, nor officers of the council.'

Nicolé Jackson was appointed Independent Chair of the Standards Committee at the Standards Committee meeting on 8th November 2018. At that time it was resolved that the appointment should be re-confirmed on an annual basis but, due to an oversight, this re-confirmation did not take place in 2019/20. In light of this, and of the vacant position for an Independent Member, the Standards Committee agreed at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020 that it was an opportune time to regularise the appointments and terms of office of Independent Members moving forwards and to advertise for an Independent Chair and an Independent Member. It was agreed that both appointments should serve for four years, with a maximum of two terms of office.

The positions of Independent Chair and Independent Member were advertised publicly in September and shortlisting and interviews followed in October, conducted by a panel consisting of the Monitoring Officer, the Deputy Monitoring Officer and Councillor Mullen as a member of the Standards Committee.

The interview panel is pleased to recommend Mr Jonathan Storey for appointment as Independent Chair of the Standards Committee. He was born and brought up initially in Rochdale and spent six years at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester. He now returns regularly to the city in his capacity as external counsel to the National Education Union North West Region.

In his early career he worked for many years as a Civil Servant in the Ministry of Defence and gained considerable experience of disciplinary, governance and finance issues as a leader and manager in a range of areas. He subsequently retrained as a lawyer and has since practised as a barrister, predominantly in the fields of public, regulatory, professional disciplinary, licensing and criminal law. In that time he has defended a large number of professionals (mainly teachers, doctors and nurses) before their regulators, prosecuted and defended criminal defendants in the Magistrates' and Crown Courts, acted on behalf of central and local government in a wide range of legal proceedings, and advised regulators including Ofqual, government departments, local authorities and schools on internal reviews, appeals, prospective prosecutions, disciplinary matters, professional standards, investigations, and complaints. He is ranked in the Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners legal directories for his expertise in professional disciplinary law. Mr Storey also sits in a

quasijudicial role as independent panel chair for the National Counselling Society, and has served as Independent Person for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. More recently he has served in this role for Salford City Council and will now be stepping down in order to take up the position as Chair of the Standards Committee.

Since her appointment in November 2018 Nicolé Jackson has been an extremely committed chair and brought with her a wealth of standards and governance experience proving to be an invaluable asset to the committee and wider Council. The Standards Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms Jackson on behalf of full Council for her service and to recognise her contribution to maintaining high standards of conduct for elected members at Salford City Council.

At this stage it is not possible to recommend to full Council an appointment to the position of Independent Member of the Standards Committee. This position has been vacant for a number of years and it is one we are keen to fill. We shall initiate a further advertising and recruitment exercise in due course and present a recommendation for your approval at a future Council meeting.

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**KEY COUNCIL POLICIES:**

Independent Members, as part of the Standards Committee, are responsible for embedding compliance with The Code of Conduct which is included in our Constitution. The Constitution sets out the governance framework for local authorities, which provides the foundations for any local authority that aspires to be effective, progressive and successful.

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**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

The recruitment process has been, and will continue to be, subject to the Council's equal opportunities, recruitment and selection policies

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**ASSESSMENT OF RISK:**

Candidates for both roles were, and will continue to be, subject to a robust shortlisting and interview process to ensure that they have the relevant skills and experience to successfully carry out their roles.

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**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The Legal background to appointment of independent members is set out in the body of the report.

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**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS Supplied by Leanne Wrigley:**

Source of funding: Members Revenue Budget – sufficient budget available

In accordance with the Constitution the annual allowance entitlements are as follows:

- Independent Chair of the Standards Committee - annual allowance of £1,109.
- Independent Member - annual allowance of £408.84.

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**PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS:** n/a

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**HR IMPLICATIONS Supplied by:** Sam Betts

The recruitment process has been, and will continue to be, in line with the Council's approach to recruitment and selection and carried out in a fair, lawful, transparent and safe manner.

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**CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS Supplied by:** n/a

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**OTHER DIRECTORATES CONSULTED:** n/a

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**CONTACT OFFICER:** Sian Roxborough, City Solicitor

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**WARDS TO WHICH REPORT RELATES:** ALL