

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**COUNTY COUNCIL
30th April 2014**

REPORT BY: Solicitor to the Council

**SUBJECT: (i) Appointment of Independent (Lay) Member on the Standards Committee.
(ii) Indemnity Cap – Members' Indemnity Claims.**

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. At the meeting of the County Council on the 24th October, 2013 arrangements were agreed to fill a vacancy in the office of an Independent (Lay) Member on the Standards Committee including the appointment of a Panel (to be chaired by the High Sheriff) to interview applicants and make appropriate recommendations to the County Council.
2. On the 5th February 2014 the Standards Committee appointed County Councillor Mrs M. Mackenzie as the County Councillor representative on the Panel and the Standards Community Sub-Committee appointed Community Councillor Derrick Pugh as the Community Council representative on the Panel. The two Independent (Lay) Members completing this five Member Panel were the Chair of Standards Committee Mrs Helen Rhydderch-Roberts and the Vice Chair, Mr Ralph Miller.
3. Following public advertisement of this vacancy in the local press and by the County Council's own newsletter 'Red Kite' expressions of interest were received from 131 members of the public. The purchase of a press notice stated that the notice should be kept to a minimum size and it was placed in the Mid Wales Journal and County Times. A press release was also sent out and a number of enquiries resulted from sight of these notices. It is understood that the press may increase the size of the advertisement and place the advertisement in different papers to fill space.
4. Applications were received from 49 eligible candidates and these were considered by the Shortlisting Panel on 6th March 2014. Six applicants were invited to interview on Thursday 13th March 2014.
5. The Panel recommend that Mrs Claire Jackson be appointed as Independent (Lay) Member for a period of 6 years from 22nd June 2014 which is the date that the post becomes vacant.

6. The Standards Committee considered the request by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales that Councils set a cap on Members' indemnity claims. The Ombudsman had originally suggested a limit of £10,000 but after representations from the WLGA he had acceded to the suggestion of a cap of £20,000. The Committee originally accepted the recommended level of £20,000. However advice from the Council's insurers was that the minimum level that can be set under the County Council insurance policy is £50,000 which the Committee agreed to recommend to the Council for approval.

Recommendation:		Reason for Recommendation:	
To note the contents of this report and to consider the Panel's recommendation and appoint Mrs Claire Jackson as an Independent (Lay) Member for a period of 6 years from 22 nd June 2014.		To comply with the requirements for Independent (Lay) members of the Standards Committee as required by the Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) .	
That a cap on indemnity claims be set for Powys County Council at £50,000		To comply with the request by the Public Services Ombudsman for a cap on Members' indemnity claims.	
Relevant Policy (ies):	N/A		
Within Policy:	N/A	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	N/A		
Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer)		
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	Immediately following the Council meeting.		
Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
Clive Pinney – Solicitor to the Council	01597 826746	01597 826220	clive.pinney@powsy.gov.uk

Background Papers used to prepare Report: