



Report to: Council

Date of Meeting: 29 June 2006

Report from: Head of Legal & Democratic Services

Title of Report: Appointment of Additional Parish Representative on the Standards Committee

Agenda Item Number: **11**

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this Report is to appoint an additional Parish Representative on the Standards Committee.
- 1.2 Members will no doubt recall that the Council adopted the advice of the Standards Board for England and changed the Constitution to have more than one parish council representative on the Standards Committee.
- 1.3 Waldridge Parish Councillor Mike Dulieu currently serves on the Standards Committee as one of the two Parish Representatives.
- 1.4 Following the amendment to the Constitution there is a vacancy for one Parish Representative.
- 1.5 All eleven Parish Councils were invited to submit nominations.
- 1.6 Two nominations for the one vacancy have been received and the Council is asked to appoint one of these persons nominated.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Parish Councils have been consulted as indicated above.

3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The Standards Committee is fundamental to the ethical agenda and its functions relate to Members of the District Council and Members of all the Parish Councils in the District.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

- 4.1.1 The appointment of a Parish Representative will result in a slight increase in potential expenditure should that Member exercise their rights to claim an allowance under the Members Allowance Scheme.
- 4.1.2 The new Representative will need to be supported in terms of training. Such training costs can be met from the existing budget.

4.2 Legal

- 4.2.1 The Council has a vacancy on the Standards Committee and this should be filled.

4.3 Personnel

- 4.3.1 Staff resources will need to be made available from the Legal & Democratic Services Team which is currently under pressure due to staff shortage. It is however anticipated that the extra demand can be absorbed.

4.4 Other Services

- 4.4.1 No direct implications.

4.5 Diversity

- 4.5.1 No direct implications.

4.6 Risk

- 4.6.1 The risk to the Community is that confidence in democracy will be eroded if there is a lack of efficiency, transparency and accountability. The appointment of a further Parish Representative will assist in building confidence.
- 4.6.2 In addition, the Parish Representative will be able to further promote the ethical agenda as part of an increased establishment.

4.7 Crime and Disorder

4.7.1 The promotion of high standards should further the Council's duty to prevent or reduce crime and disorder.

4.8 Other Implications

4.8.1 None

5. **BACKGROUND, POSITION STATEMENT AND OPTION APPRAISAL**

5.1 Under Regulation 3 (2) of The Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) Regulations 2001 a Parish Representative may not also be a Member of the responsible authority (i.e. the District Council).

5.2 The Council has received two nominations.

5.3 Great Lumley Parish Council has nominated Cllr Mrs Gill Stephenson.

5.4 Urpeth Parish Council has nominated Cllr I Clarkson.

5.5 The procedure for selection is not laid down nationally. It is therefore recommended that the previous procedure used by the Council be adopted, namely lots be drawn by the Chair. This ensures independence.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 That the Chair be authorised to draw lots in order to choose between the two nominated and eligible persons.

6.2 That the person drawn first shall be appointed to serve as a Parish Representative on the Standards Committee until 31 March 2009.

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS / DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO**

7.1 None

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