

Committee: Standards Committee	Date: 25 January 2019
Subject: Appointment of Co-opted Member of the Standards Committee	Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Decision

Summary

The purpose of this report is for the Standards Committee to approve the recommendation of the Selection Panel in respect of appointment to the existing vacancy for a Co-opted Member of the Standards Committee. The recommended appointment will be submitted to the Court of Common Council for further approval on 7 March 2019.

Details about the recommended candidate are set out below.

Recommendation

Members are asked to approve the recommended appointment for a Co-opted Member of the Standards Committee for an initial term of office of 2 years in order to better regulate the terms of office of Co-opted Members, and in accordance with views put forward by members of the Standards Committee.

Main Report

1. This report sets out the details of the recommended Co-opted Member appointment to the Standards Committee.
2. The principal function of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members of the City of London Corporation, to assist Members and Co-opted Members to observe the City of London Corporation's Code of Conduct and to deal with any allegations of breach of the City of London Corporation's Code of Conduct in respect of Members and Co-opted Members.
3. Following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011, this Committee (with the Court of Common Council's subsequent approval), determined that the Committee's composition should continue to include four Co-opted Members (with no voting rights) who must not be Members of the Court of Common Council or employees of the City of London Corporation. This determination remained unchanged following the review of the Standards framework carried out in 2017/18.
4. In line with the agreed process for appointing Co-opted Members, namely that vacancies must be advertised, candidates must submit an application and recommended appointments, submitted by an Selection Panel, must be

approved by a majority of members of the Court of Common Council, an appointment process commenced in late August 2018 and concluded in December 2018.

Background to the current position

5. A vacancy for Co-opted Member of the Standards Committee first arose in July 2016 following the decision of Felicity Lusk to step down with immediate effect due to her departure from the UK to work abroad.
6. The appointment process was then commenced in Autumn 2016. A total of six applications were received and reviewed by the appointment panel consisting of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Standards Committee, the Chief Commoner and the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen.
7. Following assessment by the Panel, three candidates were invited to interview with one candidate subsequently withdrawing from the process before interview due to ongoing ill health. Two candidates were therefore interviewed by the Panel but, unfortunately, neither candidate was considered appropriate for appointment.
8. The Chairman of the Standards Committee therefore sought the Committee's views as to how they now wished to proceed. Members were of the view that the recruitment process should be paused for the time being, particularly given the fact that there was potentially a degree of uncertainty around the future constitution of the Committee whilst the review of the Standards framework was ongoing. The Committee suggested that recruitment should be repeated at the conclusion of this process if appropriate.
9. At the conclusion of the review of Standards framework and confirmation that the constitution of the Standards Committee, in terms of Co-opted Members was to remain unchanged, a second recruitment campaign commenced in late August 2018. Advertisements about the role and the vacant positions were placed on the Guardian Online, Universal Jobmatch, the City AM (on-line) and the City of London Corporation's webpages.
10. The Panel was convened in October to consider the eight valid applications that had been received at the conclusion of the advertising campaign.
11. The applicants were asked to demonstrate:-
 - an understanding of the role and objectives of the City of London Corporation;
 - community or business experience (preferably, you will either have lived or worked in the City for a number of years);
 - an insight into and understanding of the demands and pressures placed on individuals in public service;
 - the ability to think logically and in an impartial manner;
 - an understanding of the Nolan Principles of Public Life: selflessness; integrity;

- objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty and leadership
- good questioning skills;
- the ability to attend any meetings that are necessary for the conduct of business associated with the local Standards regime; and
- experience of assessing people's conduct.

12. Following assessment by the Panel, three candidates were invited to attend interview in December 2018. The recommended appointment and details of the recommended candidate are detailed below and, if approved by this Committee, will be submitted to the Court of Common Council for further approval on 7 March 2019.

Recommended appointments

13. As above, the Selection Panel has recommended the following appointment:

Nicholas Cooke Q.C.

Nicholas Cooke has served as a Judge at the Central Criminal Court where he developed an affection for and interest in the City

He is a Freeman of the City and a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Fan Makers.

Mr Cooke has been involved in the law as a student, junior barrister, Queen's Counsel and Judge for 45 years. He has sat as a part time and full time judge for 25 years.

At the bar, Mr Cooke dealt with many cases involving professional standards and standards in local government and other aspects of public life. He has lectured to bar students on professional ethics.

As a deputy High Court Judge, he has dealt with many cases of judicial review of a very wide variety of public bodies. Most recently, this year, he has dealt with cases in the Queen's Bench Division concerned with the disallowance of banker's discretionary bonuses for misconduct and investment fraud. Mr Cooke also sat for 10 years as an additional judge of the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division).

Mr Cooke was a member of the former Lord Mayor's Panel for his annual Gresham Lecture, concerned with restoring trust in business and has also recently delivered a Gresham Lecture on "Bribery and Corruption in the City".

14. It is proposed that, following consideration by the Court of Common Council on 7 March 2019, the newly appointed Co-opted Member will be invited to attend (where necessary) a detailed induction with Comptroller and City Solicitor at the earliest opportunity. They will then be invited to attend all future meetings of the Standards Committee.

Conclusion

15. Members are asked to note the recommended appointment of a Co-opted Member of the Standards Committee for an initial term of office of 2 years in order to better regulate the terms of office of Co-opted Members, and in accordance with views put forward by members of the Standards Committee.

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