

Recruitment Pack

London Borough of Barnet Standards Committee Independent Person

Independent Person

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APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON

Thank you for your interest in becoming an Independent Person on the London Borough of Barnet's Standards Committee. I hope that this pack provides you with useful information to assist you in completing the application form.

Would you like to play an important role for the council by contributing towards maintaining high standards of behaviour in public life in Barnet council?

The Localism Act 2011 imposes a duty on the Council to "promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members" of the Council.

The Council is required to:

- Adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of Members and co-opted Members of the Council when they are acting in that capacity
- Have in place arrangements under which allegations that a Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct can be investigated, and arrangements under which decisions on allegations can be made
- Those arrangements must include the appointment of at least one "independent person", whose views must be sought, and taken into account, before any decision on an allegation which has been investigated is taken.

Barnet is seeking to appoint four Independent Persons who will be available to serve as Chairman of the Standards Committee. An Independent Person will sit as chairman as and when the Standards Committee meets to assist the Council in discharging its duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Elected Members and Co-opted Members of the London Borough of Barnet. Their views will be sought, and taken into account in assessing complaints of alleged Member or co-opted Member misconduct and deciding on a course of action. The Independent Person may also be consulted by the Member about whom an allegation has been made.

It is also part of the role of an Independent Person to be a member of a panel considering any proposal to dismiss the Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer or the Monitoring Officer (all statutory officers of the Council), and together with the other members of the panel, to make a recommendation on this to full Council.

The role as an Independent Person requires someone who...

- is either a resident of the London Borough of Barnet or, works in, or, has strong links with the area
- can demonstrate that they can remain independent in their thinking and decision making
- has some experience of chairing meetings or hearings
- has some experience of managing and maintaining high ethical standards
- is able to make judgements based on evidence or information presented
- has questioning skills

- can be assertive
- is able to work within an area of public life which is open and transparent
- can attend appropriate training sessions and hearings meetings, when required
- can demonstrate full independence from the Council and a keen interest in standards in public life
- wishes to serve the local community and uphold local democracy
- has demonstrably high standards of personal integrity objectivity, independence, impartiality and political awareness
- has experience in handling sensitive and confidential information
- has strong analytical skills, ability to reason and make balanced judgements

You cannot be an Independent Person if you are...

- currently a Councillor, co-opted Member or employee of the London Borough of Barnet or held these positions within the last five years.
- a relative or close friend of anyone who is a Councillor, co-opted Member or employee of the London Borough of Barnet
- or have been in the last five years, an active member of any political party
- or have been in the last five years, had a public profile in relation to political activities; including having been involved, in a lead or prominent role, in a significant contentious issue involving the Council.

People who have been Independent Members of the council's Standards Committee or Group Leaders Panel during the past five years may not apply for the post.

An allowance will be payable to the Independent Person whilst engaged on this work plus the cost of travel and subsistence for attending hearings. Details of the period of appointment is to be determined by the Council.

To apply for the position of Independent Person, please complete the application form which can be accessed via the link below and submit to : Sarah Koniarski, Governance Officer, London Borough of Barnet, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP. E-mail: Sarah.Koniarski@Barnet.gov.uk Tel: 020 8359 7574.

Information and an application form is also available on Barnet Council's website <https://jobs.barnet.gov.uk/>

Closing Date: Close of business on **XX**
Interviews are scheduled for the week commencing **XX**

Barnet Council is committed to promoting equality, challenging discrimination and developing community cohesion. We welcome applications from all sections of the community.

Appointment Process:

If you would like to be considered for the position of Independent Person, please complete the form and return it by noon on **XX**

Your application will then be considered and all short-listed candidates will be notified of the interview date. It is anticipated that interviews will take place the week commencing **XX** and will be held at the North London Business Park (address as above).

The successful candidates will be recommended to the next appropriate Council meeting for formal appointment.

If you have any queries about the post please contact: Sarah Koniarski, Governance Officer, London Borough of Barnet, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP. E-mail: Sarah.Koniarski@Barnet.gov.uk
Tel: 020 8359 7574.

ROLE PROFILE

Responsible to: The Monitoring Officer and the Council

Liaison with: Members and co-opted Members and Officers of Barnet Council.

Competencies and Responsibilities:

1. To assist the Council in promoting high standards of conduct by elected and co-opted members of the Council and in particular to uphold the code of conduct adopted by the Council and the principles of public office, namely selflessness, honesty, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, leadership, respect for others, duty to uphold the law and stewardship.
2. To be consulted by the Council through the Monitoring Officer in relation to an allegation before it is investigated or reported to the Standards Committee.
3. To be available for consultation by the Monitoring Officer and/or the Standards Committee both before a decision is taken as to whether to investigate a complaint, or to seek local resolution of the same or to consider an appeal against decisions taken.
4. To be available for consultation by any elected or co-opted Member who is subject to a standards complaint.
5. To be an effective chairman, ensuring that the business of the meeting is completed while allowing a fair and balanced debate and any professional advice to be taken into account.
6. To ensure that the meeting is run correctly from a procedural point of view and that decisions made are accurately recorded.
7. As the Chairman, the Independent Person is responsible for keeping order and adjourning meetings where necessary. They should also have a good level of assertiveness. It is also their responsibility to ensure that members of the public and press leave the meeting when a private report is being considered
8. To develop and apply knowledge of the Code of Conduct in relation to any and all matters relating to standards, including the assessment and determination of allegations of member misconduct under the Code of Conduct.

9. To analyse and exercise fair and impartial judgement and decision making on conduct issues.
10. To consult, liaise and maintain a professional working relationship with the council's Monitoring Officer, his / her appointed deputies and other officers of the Council.
11. To participate in training events to develop skills, knowledge and experience and in networks developed for Independent Persons operating outside the Council's area.
12. To participate in any forum established for Independent Persons.
13. To be a Member of a Panel considering the dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer of the Council, which would make a recommendation on this to Full Council
14. To undertake such other responsibilities as the Monitoring Officer considers reasonably commensurate with the position.

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BARNET COUNCIL
PERSON SPECIFICATION
INDEPENDENT PERSON (Localism Act 2011 – Standards)

	Essential	Desirable	How Measured
Localism Act 2011 criteria	Applicants must comply with the definition of an Independent Person as detailed in the Localism Act 2011, Part 1, Chapter 7, Section 28 (8) and (10)		Application
Experience	Over 18 years of age.	Experience of serving in or working for local or national government and/or legal system, tribunals or other quasi-judicial bodies.	Application and Interview
Education/Training	No specific qualifications required.		
Skills/ Knowledge	<p>Commitment to public service.</p> <p>Ability to act as the chair of an assessment or review sub-committee or a determination hearing</p> <p>Leadership qualities, particularly in respect of exercising sound judgment</p> <p>Ability to critically assess written and oral evidence to reach a balanced and objective decision.</p> <p>Ability to absorb key information from complex reports.</p>	<p>Knowledge of how local government operates and an awareness of the role of elected members and statutory officers.</p> <p>General understanding of the principles of the Members' code of conduct.</p> <p>Knowledge of rules of natural justice.</p> <p>Ability to write reports if necessary.</p>	Application and Interview

	<p>Ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people, councillors and council officers.</p> <p>Demonstrate excellent listening, problem solving and evaluation skills.</p> <p>Demonstrate tact, diplomacy and impartiality.</p>		
Personal Qualities	<p>Personal Integrity.</p> <p>Commitment to upholding high standards.</p> <p>Independence of mind – ability to form a view on the basis of facts and not to be swayed by others and act objectively.</p> <p>Commitment to confidentiality in appropriate circumstances.</p> <p>Ability and willingness to work with other members of other councils, their committees/panels and officers.</p> <p>Reliable and committed.</p>	<p>Exercise persuasion and influence.</p> <p>Think logically, seeking and receiving advice where appropriate.</p>	Application and interview
Working Arrangements	<p>Need to attend various meetings with fluctuating frequency and sometimes at short notice.</p> <p>Need to be available for and</p>	<p>Ability to identify potential conflicts of interest during working role.</p>	Application and interview

	<p>respond to consultation as and when required, and sometimes at short notice</p> <p>Attend training events and other forums as and when required.</p>		
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You should demonstrate in your application how you meet the above criteria as this will assist the short listing process.

**APPLICATION FOR THE POSITION OF
INDEPENDENT PERSON**

Individuals who wish to be considered for appointment as an Independent Person of the London Borough of Barnet are requested to provide the following information to support their application. All information provided will be treated in confidence and will only be used for the purposes of selecting Independent Persons. Please feel free to use a separate continuation page if you wish to expand upon your answer to any question outlined below.

1. PERSONAL DETAILS:

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

National Insurance Number:

Contact details:

Daytime Telephone Number:

Evening Telephone Number:

Mobile Telephone Number:

E-mail Address(es):

Please provide details or how you meet the criteria in the Person Specification and Role Profile?

Please provide any additional information you may wish to give in support of your application:

References will be taken up for all applicants who are invited for an interview

1. Name:	2 Name:
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Address:	Address:
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.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
Telephone no.:	Telephone no.:
.....
E-mail address:	E-mail address:
.....

I wish to apply to be an Independent Person of the London Borough of Barnet.

In submitting this application, I declare that: -

1. I am not now, nor have been during the last five years, a Member, co-opted Member or officer of the London Borough of Barnet;
2. I am not closely associated with anyone who is now, nor has been in the last five years, a Member,, co-opted Member or officer of the London Borough of Barnet;
3. I am not now, nor have been during the last five years, an active member of any political party;
4. I have not now, nor have had in the last five years, a public profile in relation to political activities; including having been involved, in a lead or prominent role, in a significant contentious issue involving the Council.

Signed

Date