



New Independent Member for the Standards Committee

Introduction

Thank you for expressing an interest in working with North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

Our Standards Committee provides valuable independent input into the procedures and protocols that councillors must follow, and recruiting people with the right skills and outlook is key to its success.

Having read the application pack we hope you will consider applying for the role and we look forward to receiving your application.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority is looking for one lay person to serve as independent members on its Standards Committee.

The ability to speak Welsh will be considered to be an advantage. The need to achieve a balance of skills, qualities and expertise on the Committee, as well as the need to represent the community as a whole and achieve a geographical spread, will also be taken into account.

The Standards Committee

The Standards Committee plays a central role in the ethical framework that governs the conduct of elected councillors. Every member of a local authority and of every community and town council has undertaken to abide by the Code of Conduct for Members. The Committee's main role is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by these councillors and to assist them to observe the Members' Code of Conduct.

The Committee has certain specific functions including considering complaints that members have breached the Code of Conduct and to impose a sanction where appropriate. It also considers applications made by members for dispensations to allow them to take part in discussions even though they have a prejudicial interest under the Code. Additionally, the Committee is responsible for overseeing the Gifts and Hospitality Protocol for Members.

The Standards Committee meets twice per year (unless there is urgent business to be discussed) at a time agreed with members of the committee.

Independent members are remunerated in accordance with rates set by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

The Independent Members

Applicants will be required to demonstrate independence and impartiality in assisting the Standards Committee in promoting, maintaining and improving ethical arrangements within North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's Standards Committee.

The work of the Committee requires independent members to possess and meet the following qualities, skills and requirements:-

- listening skills
- ability to understand and weigh up evidence
- ability to come to an objective view and explain that view by reference to the evidence
- team working skills
- respect for others and an understanding of diversity issues
- discretion
- personal integrity
- not actively participate in local or national politics
- not have had significant previous disputes with the Authority
- not have a close relationship with any member/officer of the Authority.

A detailed knowledge of local government is not necessary although it would be an advantage if potential candidates were interested in matters relating to public life and services.

Independent members must be:-

- eligible for selection as an independent member (see the 'Eligibility for selection' section);
- well respected in the community;
- able to meet the time commitment involved;
- able to provide two references;
- aged 18 and over.

Successful candidates will be expected to take up their appointments immediately and serve, subject to termination or resignation, for between 4 and 6 years. There is also the possibility of re-appointment for a further term of between 4 and 6 years.

Eligibility for selection

A person cannot be an independent member if he/she is:

- a councillor or officer (or married to a councillor or officer) of any county/county borough council, fire authority, national park authority, or a community/town council
- a former councillor or officer of NWFRA.

Please note that a former councillor or officer of other county/county borough councils, fire authorities or national parks can be an independent member provided it is more than 12 months since they ceased to be a councillor/ officer of such an authority.

The benefits of becoming an Independent Member

There are many reasons why people choose to get involved in this way.

- to extend their knowledge and experience
- to enhance and develop their CV in order to progress their career development
- to give something back, sharing their knowledge, skills and experience
- the opportunity to work with new people and to gain experience of different organisational approaches
- the opportunity to network with a wider group of people which has the potential to enhance other areas of their life and/or work
- as a spring board to get involved with other committees / independent review bodies.

Whatever the reason may be for your consideration of becoming an Independent Member we would really like to hear from you.

The appointments and selection process

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority is an Equal Opportunities employers and committed to ensuring all recruitment is free from any form of discrimination. Where appropriate, positive action may be taken to target the recruitment of underrepresented groups. Any such action will be monitored carefully to assess its impact.

Applications must be submitted on the appropriate application form accompanied by two letters of reference.