

Appointment of two Independent Persons

Current Arrangements

The Surrey County Council Arrangements for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches of the Member Code of Conduct currently make provision for the appointment by Council of at least one Independent Person, whose views must be sought by the Council before it takes a decision on any allegation which it has decided should be investigated.

Proposal

In line with the recommendation by the Committee for Standards in Public Life, the Member Code of Conduct Working Group has proposed that SCC appoint two Independent Persons.

Advantages

The advantages of having two Independent Persons to assist the Monitoring Officer when considering whether alleged breaches of the Member Code of Conduct had taken place, is that it widens the scope of expertise and experience and it will be in line with best practice as proposed by the Committee for Standards in Public Life.

Interviews and Appointments

Interviews for Independent Persons took place in November 2020 and the recommendation to Full Council is that Mr Akbar Khan and Philippa Harding be appointed as Independent Persons.

Mr Akbar Khan:

Mr Khan is currently a legally qualified Chair at the Metropolitan Police Misconduct Panels, and chairs the conduct of proceedings into allegations of serious breaches of professional standards that affect public confidence in policing.

Some other positions which he has held:

- Chief Executive/Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association;
- Senior Legal Adviser, British Foreign and Commonwealth Office;
- Director, Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Commonwealth Secretariat;
- Head of the International Law Section, British Embassy in The Hague;
- Lawyer - Human Rights Unit, Government Legal Service;
- Independent co-opted Member of the Audit Committee at the Borough of Richmond Upon Thames;
- Senior Legal Officer, United Nations Relief & Works Agency for Palestine;
- Legal Officer, United Nations Compensation Commission; and
- Legal Member of Staff Pension Committee, International Criminal Court, The Hague.

Philippa Harding:

Philippa is an expert in healthcare corporate governance and regulation, developed through formal qualifications and nearly 20 years' professional experience; she has a deep technical and practical understanding of the corporate governance challenges facing Boards and a successful track record of implementing actions.

She is currently a Director of Harding Advisory Ltd, which is a professional advisory service focusing on driving corporate governance improvements in healthcare settings and has also held the following positions:

- Director of Corporate Governance at the London Ambulance Service NHS Trust;
- Director of Operations at NHS Improvement (formerly Monitor, the health sector regulator);
- Board Secretary: Monitor;
- Corporate Secretary at the Care Quality Commission; and
- Clerk to the Council at the General Social Care Council.