

INDEPENDENT PERSONS

Further to interviews undertaken by the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Standards Committee, the following individuals were appointed at a meeting of Milton Keynes Council on 16 September 2020 to serve as Independent Persons for Milton Keynes Council, from 1 October 2020, for a period of 4 years:

1. Sarah Austin

Currently an Independent Person for Buckinghamshire Council, Sarah has been a practising solicitor since 1996 and a Law Society Council Member since 2010.

A specialist in complex probate, Sarah is also a member of the Judicial Appointments Commission Advisory Group and Chair of Lexcel (Excellence in Legal Practice Management), a technical panel for accreditation with responsibility for development of standards.

2. Stephanie Boyce

Currently an Independent Person for Buckinghamshire Council, Stephanie has been a practicing solicitor since 2002 with experience ranging from central and local government to time as General Counsel and Company Secretary.

As a non-executive director of the Law Society of England and a former Chair of its Council Members Conduct Committee, Stephanie is also a solicitor adjudicator member of the Joint Tribunal Service and Chair of the Independent Education Appeal Panel at Buckinghamshire Council.

3. Dr Vasco Fernandes

Currently an Independent Person for Luton, and Central Bedfordshire Councils, Dr Fernandes is a retired Consultant Physician with extensive experience at a senior clinical and management level in Public Health and Substance Misuse and was Associate Medical Director of the MK NHS Community Health Services from 2001 -2007.

Dr Fernandes is currently a Vice President of the MK Community Foundation and served as the Honorary President of the MK Equality Council From 1993 to 2010.

4. Chris Fogden

Currently an Independent Person for Luton and Central Bedfordshire Councils, Chris was also the Independent Chair of MK Council's Standards Committee for 12 years.

A former Magistrate with 24 years' experience and over 10 years' service as an Independent Town Councillor (including three years as Mayor of Buckingham), Chris currently volunteers at Woodhill Prison and Milton Keynes Citizens Advice Bureau.

5. John Jones

Currently an Independent Person for Luton, and Central Bedfordshire Councils, John was involved in setting up a forum of Independent Persons, to share experience and expertise during the transition to the current standards regime. John also serves as an Independent Panel Member for 6 police forces in the eastern region, dealing with gross misconduct allegations against police officers.

A retired company director, John served as a magistrate for over 20 years and is now Lead Governor of a large mental health Foundation Trust, serving Essex, Suffolk and Bedfordshire. John is also an Independent Chair of Stage 3 Reviews for complaints in Children's Services and a Member of the NHS Providers Governor Advisory Committee representing mental health.

6. Deborah Maggs

Currently an Independent Person for Bedford Borough Council and previously at Central Bedfordshire Council, Deborah is currently working as a language teacher at Henlow Academy. With 30 years' service at the Home Office, Deborah has experience of developing governance processes and had responsibility for leading on Parliamentary relations on EU matters.

A Magistrate with 25 years' experience and trained mediator, Deborah is also currently the Chair of the Trustees of Bedfordshire YMCA.