

SHADOW AUTHORITY FOR
WESTMORLAND AND FURNESS COUNCIL

**Recruitment Pack for Appointment of
INDEPENDENT PERSON**

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON

Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, the Shadow Authority for Westmorland and Furness Council is required to appoint an Independent Person to assist the Authority in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct amongst its elected members.

The Independent Person will be consulted on the decision to investigate complaints and before a decision is made on an investigated complaint. The Independent Person may be consulted on other standards matters, including by the member who is subject to an allegation.

The Independent Person is consulted on complaints on a case by case basis by the Monitoring Officer, and may also be asked to advise individual members who may be the subject of a complaint.

For further details, including an information pack and eligibility criteria, please visit the Shadow Authority's website or contact:

[By email: Caroline.Elwood@WestmorlandandFurness.gov.uk](mailto:Caroline.Elwood@WestmorlandandFurness.gov.uk)

Website: <https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/>

The closing date for applications is noon **2 December 2022**, Interviews will be notified after that date.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Cumbria (Structural Changes) Order 2022 provides for the establishment, on 1st April 2023, of a single tier of local government in Cumbria. Two new councils are created; the Cumberland Council, for the same area as the existing districts of Allerdale, Carlisle and Copeland, and the Westmorland and Furness Council, for the same area as the existing districts of Barrow-in-Furness, Eden and South Lakeland.

The new councils, to which elections were held in May 2022, will operate as “Shadow Authorities” until 1st April 2023 (“Vesting Day”). The Cumbria (Structural Changes) Order contains the arrangements for the Shadow Authorities, including their functions which are principally to prepare for the transition to a single tier of local government on 1st April 2023. The Order also sets out the duties of the Shadow Authorities in relation to adoption of a code of conduct.

Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and the Cumbria (Structural Changes) Order 2022 the Shadow Authority for Westmorland and Furness Council is responsible for deciding how to deal with standards issues at a local level, including adopting its own local code and determining what arrangements it will adopt to deal with complaints.

The Act and the Order provide that the Shadow Authority for Westmorland and Furness must appoint an Independent Person to assist in discharging these responsibilities. Full details of the role and responsibilities of the Independent Person are included in this Recruitment Pack.

The Shadow Authority will confirm the appointment of the Independent Person(s).

It is proposed that the term of appointment for the Independent Person(s) will be for 2 years, subject to confirmation by members of the Shadow Authority.

Up to and including 31 March 2023 (during the Shadow Period), the role of the Independent Person will be to assist the Shadow Authority in promoting high standards of conduct by elected members of the Shadow Authority including liaising with the Shadow Standards Committee.

From and including 01 April 2023 (Vesting Day), the role of the Independent Person will be to assist Westmorland and Furness Council in promoting high standards of conduct by elected members of the Council and elected and co-opted town and parish councillors, including liaising with the Standards Committee of Westmorland and Furness Council.

This is a voluntary position but reasonable travelling expenses and subsistence incurred in the role will be paid.

Selection Criteria / Skills and Competencies

The Independent Person will have:

- a keen interest in standards in public life;
- a wish to serve the local community and uphold local democracy;
- the ability to be objective, independent and impartial;
- sound decision making skills; and
- leadership qualities, particularly in respect of exercising sound judgement.

The Independent Person will:

- be a person in whose impartiality and integrity the public can have confidence;
- understand and comply with confidentiality requirements;
- have a demonstrable interest in local issues;

- have an awareness of the importance of ethical behaviours; and
- be a good communicator.

Desirable Additional Criteria

- working knowledge/experience of local government or other public service and/or of large complex organisations and awareness of and sensitivity to the political process.
- knowledge and understanding of judicial/quasi-judicial or complaints processes.

You should demonstrate in your application how you meet the above criteria as this will assist the short-listing process.

Means of assessment will be by application form and by interview.

NOTE: You will be required to be contactable at all times during normal working hours by telephone or by email and to be available to attend hearings which may be held in the day time and at relatively short notice.

Eligibility for Appointment

A person cannot be appointed as an Independent Person if they are or were within a period of five years prior to the appointment:

- An existing member or officer of the Shadow Authority;
- An existing member or officer of one of the sovereign authorities of Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council, Eden District Council or South Lakeland District Council;
- An existing member, co-opted member or officer of a parish or town council in the existing districts of Barrow-in-Furness, Eden or South Lakeland District Council ;
- Within the last 5 years any of the above
- A relative or close friend of the above.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Responsible to: The Shadow Authority for Westmorland and Furness Council (up to 31 March 2023) and thereafter Westmorland and Furness Council

Liaison with: Monitoring Officer, members of the Shadow Standards Committee / Westmorland and Furness Standards Committee, officers and members of the Shadow Authority / Westmorland and Furness Council, key stakeholders within the community, and after 31 March 2023 Town and Parish Councillors within the unitary authority's area.

1. To assist the Council in promoting high standards of conduct by elected members of the Shadow Authority / Westmorland and Furness Council and after 31 March 2023 town and parish councillors. In particular to uphold the Code of Conduct adopted by the Shadow Authority and the seven principles of public office, namely selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
2. To be consulted by the Shadow Authority / Westmorland and Furness Council through the Monitoring Officer and/or the Standards Committee before it makes a decision on an investigated allegation and to be available to attend meetings of the Hearing Panel of the Standards Committee for this purpose.

3. To be available for consultation by the Monitoring Officer and/or the Standards Committee or any sub-committee before a decision is taken as to whether to investigate a complaint or to seek local resolution of the same.
4. To be available for consultation by any elected member who is the subject of a standards complaint (from 01 April 2023 to include any town or parish councillors who are the subject of a standards complaint).
5. To develop a sound understanding of the ethical framework as it operates within the Authority and its town and parish councils.
6. To participate in training events to develop skills, knowledge and experience and in networks developed for Independent Persons operating outside the Authority's area.
7. To attend training events organised and promoted by the Authority and its Standards Committee.
8. To act as advocate and ambassador for the Authority in promoting ethical behaviour.

APPLICATION FORM

Individuals who wish to be considered for appointment as Independent Person or Substitute Independent Person at the Shadow Authority for Westmorland and Furness Council are requested to provide the following information to support their application.

All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be used for the purposes of selecting and appointing an Independent Person and Substitute Independent Person.

Please read the *Privacy Notice* attached to this Application Form.

Please use a separate continuation page if you wish to expand upon your answer to any question outlined below.

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

CONTACT DETAILS

Daytime Telephone Number:

Evening Phone number/mobile:

Email Address:

2. QUALIFICATIONS

(Please list in particular any qualifications which you think are relevant to the position of Independent Person)

3. SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE

(Please give a brief account of your experience including career, public and voluntary work together with the nature of your current or most recent occupation)

4. RELEVANT EXPERTISE/SKILLS

(Please outline briefly any knowledge or expertise which you believe would be particularly relevant to your role as an Independent Person having regard to the selection criteria and role description)

5. Why do you wish to be considered for appointment as Independent Person and what particular attributes do you believe you would bring to the role?

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

7. References may be taken up for all applicants who are invited for interview

Referee 1	Referee 2
Name	Name
Address	Address
Tel No.	Tel No.

Your referees' knowledge of you should be relevant to the person specification for the role(s) for which you are applying.

I wish to apply to be an Independent Person.

In submitting this application, I declare that:

- I am not and have not during the past five years been a member or officer of the Shadow Authority for Westmorland and Furness Council or any one of the sovereign authorities of Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council, Eden District Council or South Lakeland District Council;
- I am not and have not during the past five years been a member, co-opted member or officer of any Town or Parish Council in the existing districts of Barrow-in-Furness, Eden or South Lakeland;
- I am not related to, or a close friend of, any Member or Officer of the Shadow Authority for Westmorland and Furness Council or any one of the sovereign authorities in Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council, Eden District Council or South Lakeland District Council or any Town or Parish Council in the existing districts of Barrow-in-Furness, Eden or South Lakeland;
- I do not have a public profile in party politics including a role on the management or selection committee(s) of a registered political party, nor have I been a candidate or canvasser for a registered political party at a local or national level;
- I am not currently an officer or member, or co-opted member of any other relevant authority (this includes parish, district, county and unitary councils and Police and Fire Authorities), nor have been for the last five years;

- I do not have an existing contractual or commercial relationship with the Shadow Authority for Westmorland and Furness Council; or with any one of the sovereign authorities of Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council, Eden District Council, or South Lakeland District Council; or with any Town or Parish Council in the existing districts of Barrow-in-Furness, Eden or South Lakeland; which could cause a potential conflict of interest.
- I have not been convicted of a criminal offence (excluding minor traffic offences) in the last five years.
- I have read the privacy notice attached to this Application Form.

Signed

Date

Please return your application to:

Caroline.Elwood@WestmorlandandFurness.gov.uk

Privacy Notice

General Data Protection Regulations 2016 and Data Protection Act 2018

Your personal information will only be used by the Council:

- to contact you;
- to help determine your suitability for the role(s) applied for.

To enable the Council to do this we may also share your personal information with your nominated referees. Other than this, the Council will hold your personal information securely and in the strictest confidence.

If your application is successful and the Council appoints you to the role of Independent Person/Substitute Independent Persons, the Council will retain your personal information, other than information relating to the payment of allowances or expenses, for the term of your office plus one year, whereon it will be securely destroyed. Information relating to the payment of allowances or expenses will be kept for six years or such longer period as may be required by HMRC.

If your application is unsuccessful, the Council will securely destroy your personal information within three months of the date of the letter or e-mail notifying you that you were unsuccessful.