



Exeter
City Council

RECRUITMENT PACK

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Exeter City Council invites applications from members of the public to serve as an Independent Person. The person(s) appointed to the role would support the Council's arrangements for dealing with any complaints that an elected or co-opted Members of the City Council may have breached their Council's Member Code of Conduct. The Panel at Exeter City Council consists of two Independent Persons.

Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on all local authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst Elected Members and Co-opted Members. This included the appointment of at least one Independent Person to help discharge its duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct and having in place a process for dealing with complaints made under the Council's Code of Conduct. The Act says that a Council must seek the views of the Independent Person(s) at any stage of its investigation or consideration of an allegation before it makes a decision on an allegation that it has decided to investigate.

A decision on the appointment of the Independent Person(s) will be taken at a meeting of Full Council and appointments will be for a four-year term.

Independent Person

The role of the Independent Person will be key to the complaints process in that you may be consulted

- by the Monitoring Officer about any action that they propose to take following receipt of an initial complaint that a Member or co-opted Member has failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct;
- before any finding is made as to whether a Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct following investigation or a decision is made on action to be taken in respect of that Member; and
- by a Member or co-opted Member of their appointing authority against whom a complaint has been made.

Independent Persons may also be invited to serve on a Panel convened to advise the Council should disciplinary action be proposed in respect of certain designated senior officer posts.

Selection Criteria

The essential qualities/criteria for selection for the position are that you should:

- Be over 18 years of age
- Have a commitment to public service
- Have personal integrity and a strong commitment to upholding high standards
- Be independent and impartial
- Be able critically to assess written and oral evidence to reach balanced and objective decisions
- Possess tact, diplomacy and good communication skills
- Demonstrate excellent listening, problem solving and evaluation skills
- Be reliable and committed
- Be someone who lives or works locally.

It would also be useful to have a working knowledge of how local government operates and an awareness of the role of elected Members.

It is important that you are independent of the Council by whom you are appointed. Pursuant to the Localism Act 2011, therefore, you must not:

- be or have been within the last five years, an elected or co-opted member or an officer of the City Council; or
- be a relative or close friend of a current elected or co-opted member or officer of the City Council.

Restrictions on Appointment

Certain individuals are restricted from applying for this position. It is important that you are independent of the Council by whom you are appointed. Pursuant to the Localism Act 2011, therefore, you must not:

- (a) be or have been within the last five years a member, co-opted member or officer of Exeter City Council ending with the appointment;
- (b) be a relative or close friend of a person in (a) above.
A relative is defined as:
 - (a) the candidate's spouse or civil partner;
 - (b) living with the candidate as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners;
 - (c) The candidate's grandparent;
 - (d) Any person who is a lineal descendent of a grandparent of the candidate;
 - (e) A parent, sibling or child of a person within paragraph (a) or (b);
 - (f) The spouse or civil partner of a person within paragraph (c), (d) or (e);
or
 - (g) living with a person within paragraph (c), (d) or (e) as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners.

Term of Office

The appointment will be for a term of office of four years.

Removal from Office

The Council reserves the right to remove an Independent Person from their post if their independence is in anyway compromised, and/or they bring the reputation of the Council into disrepute.

Remuneration

This is a voluntary role for which a small allowance will be paid. The sum of £50 will be paid to the Independent Persons affiliated to the Audit and Governance Committee for up to four hours work, and £100 for four hours and over, payable to each of the two Independent Persons (up to a maximum of £500 per person in any one year).

Time Commitment

The time commitment will depend on the number of complaints received.

An ability to devote time to the role during the working day and evenings will be required.

Application Process

Information on the criteria and the role the Independent Person will play what skills and experience they will need and an application form.

The Council expects to appoint two Independent Persons.

If you are interested in this role and have any questions about what is involved then please contact the Monitoring Officer, Simon Copper.

Applications should be submitted by Friday 19th December 2025.

Please submit your application form by email or post to:

The Monitoring Officer
Simon Copper
Exeter City Council
Civic Centre, Paris Street
Exeter EX1 1JN
monitoring.officer@exeter.gov.uk

Acknowledgements

Your application will be acknowledged and you will be advised as to whether you have been successful or not in due course.

Selection

Short listing for this appointment will be based upon an assessment of how applicants meet the criteria in the 'Role Specification' as evidenced by the application. It is suggested therefore that you include information on how you meet the criteria. **Those candidates who are shortlisted will be invited for interviews on Monday 12th January 2026. The interviews will be conducted by a Selection Panel, with the appointment confirmed at the meeting of Full Council on 24 February 2026** (at which recommended candidates are not required to attend).

Training

You will receive training on the Council's Code of Conduct and the requirements of the role of Independent Person.

ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR AN INDEPENDENT PERSON

The Council is seeking to appoint at least one Independent Person in accordance with Sections 27 and 28 of the Localism Act 2011. This statutory role is central to ensuring high standards of conduct among elected and co-opted members of the authority.

As an Independent Person, you will:

1. Help the Council in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Elected and Co-opted Members of Exeter City Council
2. Uphold the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council and the seven principles of public office, namely selflessness, honesty, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness and leadership.
3. Be consulted by the Council through the Monitoring Officer before they make a decision on an investigated allegation that a councillor has breached the Code of Conduct, following investigation.
4. Work closely with the Monitoring Officer and Audit & Governance Committee, considering whether complaints merit investigation or to seek local resolution and advising on outcomes.
5. Be available for consultation by any Elected Member, who is the subject of a standards complaint.
6. Develop a sound understanding of the ethical framework as it operates within Exeter City Council and act as advocate and ambassador for the Council in promoting ethical behaviour.
7. Attend training events to develop skills, knowledge and experience and in networks developed for Independent Persons operating outside the District Council's area.
8. Attend training events organised and promoted by the Council's Audit & Governance Committee.

PERSONAL SPECIFICATION FOR AN INDEPENDENT PERSON

No formal qualifications are required but the skills and competencies the Council will look for, and which you should demonstrate in your application is set out below:

Essential Criteria

1. A broad range of experience in public, private, voluntary or charitable sectors, including self employed employed and voluntary positions.
2. Good analytical skills and the ability to assimilate information quickly and arrive at a balanced judgement.
3. Maintain confidentiality and act with a high level of personal integrity.
4. The ability to be objective, independent and impartial.
5. A commitment to the principles governing the conduct of Members generally and matters of probity and integrity in particular.
6. Possess good communication and interpersonal skills, tact, diplomacy, logical reasoning and impartiality in handling sensitive matters and the ability to co-operate with officers and Members in a Committee setting.

Desirable Criteria

1. Working knowledge of local government or other aspects of the public service and/or of large, complex organisations.
2. Experience of considering and making judgements on, matters which are similar to allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct in other contexts.
3. Substantial awareness and understanding of the political process.
4. Knowledge or experience of procedures for meetings.



Exeter
City Council

Application for appointment as an Independent Person

Before completing this form, please read the background information carefully.

Title	
Surname	Forename(s)
Home address	
Postcode	
Home telephone number	Mobile telephone number
Email address (to which all correspondence should be sent)	

Are there any arrangements which we can make for you if you are called for interview to assist with any disability or for any other reason? YES/NO

If Yes, please specify

Please give details of any work-related, professional or academic qualifications, and when and where they were obtained.

Are you:

Employed

Self-employed

Not in paid employment

Retired

Other
(please specify)

Description of employment trade or business, and if employed, the name of your current employer (*if applicable*)

When did you start this occupation?

Have you ever been elected to serve as an Exeter City Councillor or appointed to serve as a co-opted member of the City Council? Please give details:

Have you ever been employed by Exeter City Council?

Are you related to or a close friend of any person who is currently an Exeter City Councillor or who is employed by Exeter City Council?

Describe briefly in the space provided of your background and why you think you have the skills necessary to undertake the role of an Independent Person.

Is there anything in your private life, or in your past, which to your knowledge or that of any member of your family or close friends, if it became generally known, might bring you or the Council into disrepute, or call into question your integrity, authority or standing as an Independent Member?

Have you ever been involved in a dispute with the City Council or have you been involved in a dispute with any other public authority within the last five years? (If yes, please provide details)

Please give the name, address and telephone number of two referees who are not related to you, and who are able to comment on your suitability for appointment. Your referees will be contacted without further notice to you, unless you indicate to the contrary.

REFEREE 1

Title

Name

Address

Telephone Number

Email address

REFEREE 2

Title

Name

Address

Telephone Number

Email address

Declaration

I wish to be considered for appointment as an Independent Person and the information which I have given is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. By signing below I certify that:

- I have not been at any time within the last five years, a member, co-opted member or employee of Exeter City Council.
- I am not a relative or close friend of a current member, co-opted member, or employee of Exeter City Council.
- I am politically neutral.
- I have not been convicted of a criminal offence (not including minor traffic offences) in the last 5 years.
- The information which I have given is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed**Date**

Please return your completed form either by email or post **by no later than Friday 19th December 2025** to:

Monitoring.officer@exeter.gov.uk

or

Mr Simon Copper
Monitoring Officer
Exeter City Council
Civic Centre
Paris Street
Exeter
EX1 1JN

Please mark your envelope PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL