

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference, Constitution, Rules and Procedures

Role

1. Promotion of the highest standards of conduct and behaviour amongst Members and Officers.
2. Drawing up of Codes of Conduct, Guidelines and Protocols on all aspects of conduct and behaviour within the Council, for approval by Council.
3. The Assessment sub-committee will consider complaints and allegations of Code of Conduct breaches concerning District and Parish/Town Councillors and determine if the complaint should be investigated.
4. The Review sub-committee will consider reviews where the Assessment sub-committee has previously decided not to refer a complaint for investigation.
5. Consideration of complaints at the appropriate stage of the Council's Customer Care Procedure.
6. Consideration of reports and findings of the Local Government Ombudsman.
7. Consideration of complaints and allegations arising under the Council's Whistleblowing Policy.

Constitution

8. The Standards Committee will comprise:
 - the Chairman of Council;
 - the Vice-Chairman of Council;
 - immediate past Chairman of Council;
 - two other Councillors who are not members of the Executive Committee;
 - three people who are not councillors or officers of the Council or any other body having a Standards Committee (co-opted Independent Members);
 - three town/parish council members representing town/parish councils wholly or mainly in the Council's area (the Town/Parish Members);
 - The Chairman and vice-chairman of the Committee will be elected from amongst the independent lay members of the Committee.
 - The Assessment sub-committee and Review sub-committee will comprise 3 three Councillors including an independent member and, where the matter concerns a Parish Council, a Parish Council Representative, provided that members on the Assessment sub-committee shall not sit on a Review sub-committee in relation to the same matter.

Rules and Procedures

9. The Standards Committee will meet as and when required

10. The Minutes and Reports of the Committee, including any minority reports, will be submitted to Council and will be public documents available for inspection, examination and public consideration.
11. The Committee will be advised by the Council's Monitoring Officer and serviced by the Democratic Services Section.
12. Meetings will be held in public, with the full right of attendance for all Councillors, public and press, except during consideration of Exempt business, and Public Participation will apply (Appendix 1 refers).
13. Other Members and/or officers of the Council may be requested to attend meetings of the Committee where the matter(s) to be discussed make it necessary.
14. An agenda, together with reports will be circulated to all Members of the Council and all Town/Parish Councils within the District at least five clear working days before the meeting.
15. When assessing complaints alleging breaches of the code of Conduct the Committee shall have regard to the published criteria for:
 - Referring complaints for investigation; and
 - Maintaining complainants confidentiality.

(See Part 5 – Codes and Protocols of this Constitution.)

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