

10. ARTICLE 10 – THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

10.1 Standards Committee

10.1.1 The Council will establish a Standards Committee comprising:

- six councillors other than the Chairman and the Leader of the Council.
- six persons who are not Councillors or officers of the Council or any other body having a Standards Committee (independent members);
- three members of Parish Councils wholly or mainly in the Council's area and who are not a member of South Staffordshire Council (Parish Members), plus three alternate Parish Members (N.B. a Parish Council may have only one Parish Member of the Standards Committee or alternate Parish Member of the Standards Committee)

10.1.2 Independent Members and Parish Members (or alternate Parish Members acting in the absence of their nominated Parish Members if present) will be entitled to vote at meetings.

10.1.3 The Standards Committee does not have to comply with political balance rules under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Notwithstanding this provision, the six councillors from South Staffordshire Council will be appointed to reflect the political balance of the Council.

10.2 Parish Members

At least one parish member must be present when matters relating to Parish Councils or their members are being considered.

10.3 Chairing the Committee

Only an independent member shall be eligible for election as Chairman of the Standards Committee or of a sub-committee of the Standards Committee.

10.4 Quorum

10.4.1 The quorum for a meeting of the Standards Committee shall be 4, which must include at least one independent member (and is subject to the requirement at 10.2 when matters pertaining to Parish Councils or Parish Councillors are being considered).

10.4.2 The quorum for a meeting of a sub-committee of the Standards Committee shall be 3, which must include at least one independent member (and is subject to the requirement at 10.2 when matters pertaining to Parish Councils or Parish Councillors are being considered).

10.5 Roles and Function

The Standards Committee will have the following roles and functions:

- To promote high standards of conduct by Councillors (including Parish Councillors).

- To advise the Council and the Parish Councils on the adoption or revision of their Code of Conduct.
- To advise the Council on the operation of the Code of Conduct.
- To monitor that such Codes of Conduct have been adopted by the Council and the Parish Councils and that Members of the Councils concerned have signed to accept the provisions of the relevant Code.
- To ensure that arrangements are made for advice to be available to assist members to comply with the adopted Codes of Conduct.
- To ensure that arrangements are put in place for keeping and updating the Registers of Members' Interests for the Council and for the Parish Councils.
- Advising on training for Councillors, Parish Councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to the Code of Conduct.
- The granting and supervision of exemption from political restriction for employees as defined in the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989 (i.e. employees holding "politically restricted" posts)
- Functions relating to standards of conduct of councillors under any relevant provision of or under the regulations made under the Local Government Act 2000.
- To consider any reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal and any report from the Monitoring Officer on any matter which is referred by the Standards Board for England to the Monitoring Officer or which falls within the remit of the Standards Committee under the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008, and making determinations thereon, or on any other matter which falls within the jurisdiction of the Monitoring Officer.
- The determination of applications from District and Parish Councillors for dispensations pursuant to the Local Government Act 2000 and the Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) (Dispensations) Regulations 2002.
- To consider appeals against disciplinary action (including dismissal) grading applications (until such time as job evaluation is implemented) and grievances by employees of the Council.
- To advise the Council on its Code of Corporate Governance/Ethical Governance Framework.
- To monitor and to advise the Council on its "whistleblowing" policy.
- The Council's formal complaints procedure.
- To determine appeals against public interest test decisions under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 2000.
- To be the Standards Committee for the Parish Councils in the District of South Staffordshire.

