

Article 9 - The Standards Committee

9.01 Constitution

The Council at its Annual Meeting will establish a Standards Committee.

9.02 Composition

a) Membership

The Standards Committee will be composed of:

- six Councillors (who may not include the Leader or more than one other Cabinet Member), two from the majority group on the Council and at least one from each of the other political groups on the Council; and
- nine suitable persons (an "Independent Member") who are not Councillors or officers of the Council or Members of any other body having a Standards Committee and who are not related to or have a close friendship or relationship with Councillors or Officers of the Council

b) Independent Members will be appointed by the Council for a 3 year term of office subject to confirmation at the Annual Council meeting and each will retire on a rolling basis. An independent Member who has completed a 3 year term may apply to serve a further term or terms.

Independent Members will be entitled to vote at meetings.

c) Chairing the Committee

A member of the Executive may not chair the Committee. The chair and the vice chair of the Committee will be Independent Members.

9.03 Role and Function

The Standards Committee will have the following roles and functions:

- (a) promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors, co-opted Members, church, other faith and parent governor representatives;
- (b) assisting the Councillors, co-opted Members and church, other faith and parent governor representatives to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (c) advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;

- (d) monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (e) advising on the training of Councillors, co-opted members and church, other faith and parent governor representatives on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (f) granting dispensations to Councillors, co-opted Members, church, other faith and parent governor representatives from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (g) dealing with any reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal and any report from the Monitoring Officer on any matter which is referred by an Ethical Standards Officer to the Monitoring Officer;
- (h) advising the Council on other Codes and Protocols forming the authority's ethical framework;
- (i) to consider arrangements for the appointment of Independent Members to the Committee;
- (j) to review the Corporate Governance Framework of the Council ensuring the authority operates within a robust framework;
- (k) to consider any report referred to it by the Cabinet or any other Committee where there are implications for ethical standards and report back as appropriate;
- (l) to receive whistleblowing reports and reports on any ethical issues arising from audit investigations;
- (m) to receive quarterly monitoring reports on complaints under the Council's Corporate Complaints procedure;
- (n) to report annually on its work to Council.
- (o) to appoint sub committees, each of which must be chaired by an Independent Member, to discharge any function specified in sections 57A and 57B of the Local Government Act 2000 (initial assessment and review of complaints relating to Member conduct);
- (p) to conduct hearings in respect of Councillor conduct relating to the Member Code of Conduct in accordance with the statutory guidance and regulations from time to time

In relation to its powers to deal with (d) above the Committee has appointed Sub Committees:

- the Assessment Sub Committee to assess complaints received

- the Review Sub Committee to review the decision of the Assessment Sub Committee upon request from a complainant of any decision to take no further action;
- the Hearings Sub Committee to consider the report of the Monitoring Officer relating to any local investigation or any reference from the Standards Board for England following the investigation of a complaint of breach of the Code of Conduct by a Member of the Council.

9.04 Reports referred to Council

The Independent Chair of the Standards Committee shall be entitled to address the Council on any report referred to it by the Standards Committee which has implications for ethical governance.

9.05 Quorum

The quorum of the Standards Committee shall be 3 of the total membership of the committee to include at least one independent member.