

REPORT TO	ON
Standards Committee	29 June 2017

Jan 2017



TITLE	AUTHOR	Agenda item No.
Standards Committee – Progress Report	Interim Governance Manager	5

## 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report updates members on progress on a number of issues since the last meeting of the Committee in February 2017.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the report.

## 3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The report relates to the following corporate priorities

Clean, green and safe		Strong and healthy communities	
Strong South Ribble in the heart of prosperous Lancashire		Efficient, effective and exceptional council	√

## 4. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

4.1 At their meeting in February Members agreed to progress a number of issues and agreed a work programme for the Committee over the next 12 months.

4.2 This report updates members on progress on a number of issues which are not the subject of a separate Committee report elsewhere on the agenda.

## 5. Appointment of Second Independent Person

5.1 Members agreed to the appointment of a second additional Independent Person at their previous meeting and noted the process to be followed.

5.2 Following the meeting the role was widely publicised as follows:

- Advert in the LEP
- Publicised on the Councils website, facebook and twitter
- Circulated existing Independent Persons serving at neighbouring Councils
- Circulated all partners on South Ribble Partnership (over 300)

**5.3** The closing date for applications was 24 April 2017. Interviews were held on Tuesday 2 May with the former Chairman of the Committee Cllr Hesketh, Cllr Evans, Mr Barry Parsonage (the Councils existing Independent Person) and the Council's Interim Monitoring Officer.

**5.4** Mr David Haley was offered the role and his appointment was subsequently approved at full Council on the 24 May 2017.

**5.5** Mr Haley is eminently suitable having considerable experience of working in Local Government with a neighbouring Local Authority.

## **6. Member/Officer Protocol**

**6.1** The Council currently has a Protocol within the Constitution which deals with Member/ Officer Relations but the Committee has requested that a new Member/Officer Protocol be developed.

**6.2** The development of a suitable Protocol has been included within the Council's draft Corporate Improvement Plan and following the recent diagnostic audit by the CfPS the LGA has indicated its intention to fund development work as part of the support for the Council going forward. This is currently being scoped and will be put out to tender shortly.

## **7. Training and Development**

**7.1** Members also requested that Member attendance at training and development be explored. The Council is currently developing a Transformation & Organisational Development Strategy which will look at Member Development as well as other development areas.

**7.2** Although there are a number of development opportunities for Independent Persons there tends to be less for Standard Committee Members or Members generally on standards and ethical issues since the introduction of the Localism Act 2011 and the abolition of the Standards Board for England. Accordingly any training is likely to need to be bespoke or provided internally.

**7.3** Further updates will be brought as the Strategy is developed.

## **8. LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (Peer Review)**

**8.1** The Peer review took place in March and the final report was reported to Cabinet and published in June. The report contains a number of recommendations to be delivered over the next 6-months and as a result a new Corporate Improvement Plan has been developed, the key themes of which are as follows:

- Strong and effective political and managerial leadership;
- The development of a clear and concise vision for the future of the Borough and the Council;
- Delivery of the MTFs, including business transformation, shared services and the review of leisure
- A review of different models for the operation of the Governance Committee
- A cross party Improvement Reference Group (IRG) chaired by the Leader of the Council has been established. The group is a partnership between the Council and the Local Government Association the purpose of which is to provide oversight, support and challenge to the Council's improvement and transformation journey.

## 9. Review of Terms of Reference for Committee

**9.1** The amended Terms of Reference for the Committee which were reported to the last meeting for approval were subsequently formally approved by the Governance Committee and full Council in May without amendment. A copy of the new Terms of Reference are enclosed at Appendix A.

## 10. Review of Code of Conduct and Guidance

**10.1** At the last meeting of the Standards Committee Members reviewed the existing Code of Conduct for members. It has been in force since July 2012 and so a review was timely.

**10.2** Members were satisfied that the Code was still fit for purpose and so, apart from recommending the seven principles of public life at section B were updated as these had changed, did not propose any changes to the existing Code.

**10.3** However Members did feel that it would be helpful to provide more detailed guidance for members. The Councils graphics team subsequently improved the look and layout of both documents and following approval by full Council both documents were uploaded to Councillor Connect for Members Information. Copies are now attached at Appendices B & C.

## 11. WIDER IMPLICATIONS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTATION

### 11.1 Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### 11.2 Comments of the Monitoring Officer

There is a statutory requirement to have a local code of conduct for members and to have at least one Independent Person as part of the ethical code regime.

Otherwise there are no specific legal implications arising from this update report which need bringing to members attention.

<b>Other implications:</b>	
<b>Risk</b>	There are no specific risk implications arising from this report
<b>Equality</b>	There are no specific equality implications arising from this report
<b>HR</b>	There are no specific HR implications arising from this report

## 12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

**Appendix A** copy of the new Terms of Reference of Standards Committee

**Appendix B** Code of Conduct for Elected Members and Guidance on the Code