

Standards Committee

1. Standards Committee

Appointed by Council at the first business meeting of the municipal year.

2. Membership

- (a) **Political Balance.** The committee is required to have proportional political balance.
- (b) **Membership.** Up to a maximum of 12 members
- (c) **Chairing the Committee.** Chairman appointed by the Council at the first business meeting of the new municipal year.

3. Terms of Reference

- (a) To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members, co-opted members, town and parish councillors and employees
- (b) To advise the Council on the adoption or revision of the [Code of Conduct for Elected Members](#)
- (c) To monitor the operation of the Codes of Conduct
- (e) To ensure members, co-opted members and town and parish councillors receive appropriate advice and training on registration of interests, the code of conduct and standards of behaviour generally
- (f) To decide on applications for dispensations in respect of members interests
- (g) To oversee the production of the Standards Annual Report and recommend it to Council
- (h) To determine allegations received in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and supporting regulations

4. Sub-committees of the Standards Committee

The Hearing Panel

The Hearing Panel may be convened by the Monitoring Officer when required:

- (a) To conduct hearings and make decisions on allegations following investigation
- (b) To make decisions on allegations where the Monitoring Officer considers it is appropriate to refer the initial complaint to the Panel for determination

Composition

- (a) 5 Members of the Standards Committee
- (b) The Chair to be appointed on ad hoc basis at the commencement of the meeting
- (c) The Panel will seek and take into account the views of an Independent Person before making a decision on any allegation which has been investigated.
- (d) Where a complaint concerns a town or parish councillor the Panel may also seek the views of a Parish Representative before making a decision on any allegation which has been investigated.

5. Independent Person

- (a) The Localism Act 2011 requires Full Council to appoint an Independent Person to assist the Monitoring Officer, Standards Committee and members with the determination of complaints about members, co-opted members and town and parish councillors.
- (b) The appointment will follow a process of public advertisement, application and selection.
- (c) The Independent Person is not a member of the Standards Committee, or of any of its sub-committees (Hearing Panels), but may attend meetings of the Standards Committee and is invited to attend all meetings of the Hearings Panel.
- (d) The views of the Independent Person must be sought and taken into consideration before the Standards Committee takes any decision on whether the member's conduct constitutes a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct and as to any action to be taken following a finding of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.
- (e) More detailed information on the role of the Independent Person and his/her involvement in the investigation of complaints is contained in the [Protocol relating to the Independent Person](#).

Notes

Under the Localism Act 2011 the appointment of a Standards Committee is discretionary.