

Article 10 – The Standards Committee

10.1 Standards Committee

The Council Meeting will establish a Standards Committee.

10.2 Membership – The Standards Committee will be composed of nine Councillors. In addition the Standards Committee shall appoint:

- such Independent Members as the Committee considers appropriate. The Independent Members shall not have the right to vote;
- two Parish Council Members without the right to vote.

10.3 Independent Persons

An Independent Person:

- must be consulted and their views taken account of before the Standards Committee/Hearings Panel takes a decision on any allegation that is to be investigated;
- may be consulted by the Monitoring Officer in circumstances where an allegation is not to be investigated;
- may be consulted by a Member against whom an allegation has been made; and
- may be consulted by a Parish Councillor against whom an allegation has been made.

10.4 The Hearings Panel

The Committee shall establish a Hearings Panel.

The Hearings Panel shall be made up of any three Councillors of the Standards Committee, plus an Independent Member (without the right to vote), plus a Parish Council Member (without the right to vote) where a Parish Council issue is to be considered, and shall meet on an ad hoc basis

The Hearings Panel shall:

- consider any Investigating Officer's report referred to it by the Monitoring Officer and an Independent Person and conduct a hearing to determine if a Member or Co-opted Member of the Council (or a member of a Parish Council) has failed to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct (or such Members' Code of Conduct adopted by a Parish Council); and
- announce their findings upon the conclusion of the hearing and if finding a member or Co-opted Member of the Council (or Parish Councillor) has failed to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct, set out such sanctions from the list set out in paragraph 8 of the Council's "Arrangements for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct" as they think fit.

10.5 Terms of Reference

- 10.5.1 To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the Members and co-opted members of the Council.
- 10.5.2 To assist Members and co-opted members to observe the Code of Conduct for Councillors.
- 10.5.3 To advise the Council on the adoption or revision of its Code of Conduct.
- 10.5.4 To monitor the operation and effectiveness of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.
- 10.5.5 To advise, train or arrange to train Members and Co-opted Members on matters relating to the Code of Conduct for Councillors and other issues relating to standards and conduct.
- 10.5.6 To assess and review complaints alleging breaches of the Code of Conduct by Members and Co-opted Members.
- 10.5.7 To conduct determinations hearings of complaints alleging breaches of the Code of Conduct through the Hearings Panel as described in 10.4 above.
- 10.3.8 To grant dispensations referred by the Monitoring Officer to Members and Co-opted Members with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
- 10.3.9 To promote high ethical standards within Parish Councils.

- 10.5.8 To advise the Council on the adoption or revision of all protocols and/or guidance, insofar as these relate to standards or ethical conduct issues.
- 10.5.9 To consider any matter referred to it by the Monitoring Officer.
- 10.5.10 To exercise such other responsibilities as may be prescribed by law.
- 10.5.11 To undertake any action that improves, promotes, safeguards or facilitates the highest standard, of probity and ethical conduct by the Council its Members and Officers and those with whom it has, or who seek a contractual, financial or other relationship and to advise the Council on the ethical aspects of good governance standards for public service.
- 10.5.12 To monitor the registers of Members' interests made under the Council's Code of Conduct, and to monitor the interests of any Officers who, in accordance with any requirements upon them, are required to declare such interests to the Council.
- 10.5.13 To respond to national reviews and consultations on governance related issues, in so far as they affect standards or ethical conduct issues.