

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Your attendance is requested at a meeting to be held in the Jeffrey Room,
St. Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE on
Monday, 19 December 2016 at 5:00 pm

D. Kennedy
Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. MINUTES
The Standards Committee to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 December 2015.
3. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
5. TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS - MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT AND REGISTER OF INTERESTS
The Standards Committee to receive an update on recent Councillor training - Members Code of Conduct and Register of Interests
6. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY
The Standards Committee to receive a briefing on the Whistleblowing Policy
7. WORKPLAN FOR THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE
Councillors to consider a Work Plan for the Standards Committee
8. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED
9. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS
THE CHAIR TO MOVE:
"THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS BE EXCLUDED FROM THE REMAINDER OF THE MEETING ON THE GROUNDS THAT THERE IS LIKELY TO BE DISCLOSURE TO THEM OF SUCH CATEGORIES OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED BY SECTION 100(1) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS LISTED AGAINST SUCH ITEMS OF BUSINESS BY REFERENCE TO THE APPROPRIATE PARAGRAPH OF SCHEDULE 12A TO SUCH ACT."

Public Participation

Members of the public may address the Committee on any non-procedural matter listed on this agenda. Addresses shall not last longer than three minutes. Committee members may then ask questions of the speaker. No prior notice is required prior to the commencement of the meeting of a request to address the Committee.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Monday, 21 December 2015

PRESENT: Councillor Patel (Chair); Councillor Oldham (Deputy Chair); Councillors Gowen, Marriott, Aziz, Parekh, Chunga and Russell

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Larratt.

2. MINUTES

The minutes from the Standards Committee held on 14th September 2015 were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

None

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

5. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

None

6. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 - UPDATE

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer submitted the report as set out in the agenda. The report outlined the implications of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA') as it relates to covert surveillance carried out by local authorities.

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer commented that local authorities had been subject to criticism about how they used powers under RIPA, for example, for using RIPA to carry out covert surveillance to investigate low level offences such as dog fouling, which was not what the legislation was intended to be used for. The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer commented that citizens should be able to go about their ordinary business without local authority monitoring as there are clearly human rights implications in carrying out covert surveillance. He further explained that covert surveillance carries the risk of collateral intrusion, where private information is obtained about people other than the subject of the surveillance (for example, the subject's family members).

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer explained that the RIPA regime contains strict measures to ensure proper use of the powers and that there is now an additional requirement that local authorities must fulfil if they wish to use RIPA powers, as before any covert surveillance can be carried out, they must seek judicial approval of the use of RIPA, after following the ordinary internal authorisation process.

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer explained that the Council's RIPA Policy covered two types of covert surveillance that the Council could potentially carry out under the Act.

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer advised that the Office of Surveillance

Commissioners oversees local authority use of covert surveillance powers under RIPA and that they inspect local authority policy and processes on a three yearly cycle. He advised Members that the Council's use of RIPA powers was very low but that from the perspective of the Office of Surveillance Commissioners, they needed to be satisfied that the Council had all of the correct policies and procedures in place ready to be engaged if the need arises to use the powers.

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer explained that the Council had recently had an inspection from the Office of Surveillance Commissioner and that the Inspector HH Brian Barker would report formally in due course. (The previous report had been good). He explained that the Inspector had made some preliminary comments that it was appropriate to advise Members of and directed Members to paragraph 3.1.7 of the report. In particular, the Inspector had advised that the Council should involve elected Members in the formulation of RIPA policy and the monitoring of its use, even if RIPA is only used rarely. The Monitoring Officer commented that as part of the involvement of all Members, it was likely that in future, a report would be taken to Full Council. The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer also highlighted the preliminary recommendation regarding the need for the Council to have at least two RIPA Authorising Officers.

In response to questions from Members, the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer confirmed that he was an Authorising Officer, advised that he is also able to designate other Council officers as Authorising Officers and that the Authorising Officers would not necessarily have to be legal officers and would more likely be officers from the service areas that are likely to use RIPA powers. For example, the Environmental Health Department might seek to use RIPA covert surveillance powers in relation to the enforcement functions that they carry out.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

7. PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer submitted the report as set out in the agenda. The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer advised that prior to changes made to Standards Committees by the Localism Act 2011, Parish Council members were members of the Standards Committee. However, Standards Committees are now ordinary local government committees and it is not possible to have people who are not Borough Councillors, as formal members of the Committee. The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer advised that it is very good practice for the Standards Committee to have Parish Council members and that the Terms of Reference of the Standards Committee in the Constitution anticipates it will have two Parish Council Members as non-voting co-optees. The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer commented that the Terms of Reference also provide for two Independent Members to be part of the Committee and that this would need to be considered separately. He explained that the report recommended that the Committee agree to the appointment by co-option of two Parish Councillors to the Committee, and delegate the power to him to make these appointments on its behalf in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Standards Committee. The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer advised that alternatively, if Members wished to be more directly involved, they could set up a Working Group to recruit and appoint Parish Council Members.

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer advised that the intention was to approach Parish Clerks to ask if there are any Parish Councillors interested in becoming members of the Committee and that if more than two people indicated interest, then a process would be used. In response to a question, the Monitoring Officer clarified that if Members accepted

the recommendation in the report, then the matter would not be brought back to Committee to decide who to appoint or to confirm the appointments, as the Monitoring Officer would make the appointments. However, a noting report could be brought to Standards Committee to update them following the Monitoring Officer's appointments.

Members discussed dual hatted Members, being Parish Council Members who are also Borough Council Members and whether such Members could sit on the Standards Committee in a Parish Councillor capacity and noted this should be considered.

RESOLVED:

That the appointment by co-option of two Parish Councillors to the Committee be agreed and the power be delegated to the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer to make these appointments on its behalf in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Standards Committee.

The meeting concluded at 5.22pm

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Appendix
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STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Training for Councillors – Members’ Code of Conduct and Register of Interests
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	19 December 2016
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Members of the Standards Committee on the recent training that took place for Councillors on the Members’ Code of Conduct and Register of Interests.

2. Recommendations

2.2 To note the content of the report.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background and Issues

3.1.1 On Thursday 30 November 2016 a training session for Councillors was held on the Members’ Code of Conduct and Register of Interests. A number of Councillors and Officers attended the training session.

3.1.2 Content of the training session

The training session covered various issues including:

- Localism Act 2011
 - Changes to the system regulating Councillor Conduct
- Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Personal Interests
- Registration and Disclosure of Interests

- When to disclose
- What a Councillor must do when they have an interest
- Role of the Monitoring Officer
- Consequences of non-compliance
- Sensitive Interests
- A case study was provided

3.1.3 Open Day

In addition to the training, an “open day” was set aside on Friday, 9 December 2016, between 9am and 5:30pm. The purpose of the open day was to provide a facility for Councillors to drop in to the Council Offices to complete or update a Register of Interests form should they have needed to, and obtain the answer to any queries they may have had regarding declarations of interest.

3.1.4 Further Ethical and Governance Training for Councillors

At the meeting of the Standards Committee on 14th September 2015, it was agreed that a Working Group, comprising three Members be established. The Working Group was established to:

- consider the training requirements of all Members of the Council in relation to ethical and governance matters within the remit of the Standards Committee; and
- to devise a Training Strategy, which also includes consideration of the extent to which such training should be extended to Parish Councils within the Borough.

3.1.5 Membership of the Working Group consists of Councillors Oldham, Marriott and Parekh.

3.1.6 It is suggested that the Standards Committee considers the remit of this Working Group at agenda item 7 – Work Plan for the Standards Committee.

3.2 **Choices**

3.2.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 This report does not have any direct policy implications.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 This report does not have any direct resource implications.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 The legal framework for registering and declaring interests is identified in the body of the report.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 Not applicable.

4.6 Other Implications

4.6.1 None.

5. Background Papers

5.1 Councillor Training Presentation – Members’ Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests – 30 November 2016

**Tracy Tiff
Scrutiny Officer**

Appendix 1



STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Whistleblowing Policy - Update
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	19 th December 2016
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members of the Committee about the Council’s Whistleblowing Policy Statement and Procedure (the “Whistleblowing Policy”).

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the content of this Report and advise the Monitoring Officer if it has any comments that it requests are taken into account by Officers during their forthcoming review of the Council’s Whistleblowing Policy.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

3.1.1 The Council has a Whistleblowing Policy in place as part of its overall Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy. The current Whistleblowing Policy is attached as Appendix 1.

3.1.2 Whistleblowing refers to the act of reporting or exposing wrongdoing either internally, within the organisation, or externally, for example to a regulator.

3.1.3 The purpose of the Council’s Whistleblowing Policy is to enable those who work for the Council to disclose allegations of malpractice and be confident that the matter will be effectively investigated and that they will not be left

vulnerable to any form of victimisation, or be subject to reprisal as a result of “blowing the whistle”.

3.1.4 The following lists examples of types of malpractice that might be reported/disclosed under the Council’s Whistleblowing Policy:

- Conduct which is a criminal offence or a breach of law
- Dangerous procedures risking the health, safety or welfare of other employees or members of the public
- Damage to the environment
- Unauthorised use of public funds
- Fraud or corruption
- Sexual or physical abuse of clients
- Disclosures related to miscarriages of justice
- Other unethical conduct

3.1.5 Whistleblowing is an important aspect of good governance within organisations. Maintaining an effective Whistleblowing Policy contributes to an organisational environment where the prevention of fraud and malpractice is encouraged and where its detection is promoted.

3.1.6 As a key governance committee of the Council, it is important that the Standards Committee is involved in the monitoring and review of the Council’s Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.

3.2 Issues

3.2.1 A full review of the Whistleblowing Policy is due. This review will be undertaken as part of the implementation of the Council’s Governance Action Plan (that was considered by Audit Committee on 5th December 2016).

3.2.2 The purpose of the review of the Whistleblowing Policy will be to:

- Ensure that it is updated to reflect any legislation changes and current best practice and guidance eg. government guidance and guidance provided by the charity Public Concern at Work.
- Give consideration to how the Policy and Procedure could be applied to disclosures from people other than employees. (In practice, disclosures of malpractice that have been made to the Council by people other than employees have been dealt with using the Whistleblowing Procedure when appropriate).
- Give consideration to the provision of external whistleblowing reporting. (For example, staff who wish to make a whistleblowing disclosure could be given the option of making a confidential disclosure to an external organisation who specialise in dealing with whistleblowing disclosures. This may have the effect of encouraging people, who may not otherwise feel that they can “blow the whistle” internally, to make a disclosure. This would be in addition to the current options of making the disclosure

internally within the Council eg. to Senior Management or making the disclosure externally to the relevant regulatory body).

- 3.2.3 In addition to reviewing the Whistleblowing Policy itself, the review will also give consideration to how to increase the profile of whistleblowing. It is not sufficient to simply have a Whistleblowing Policy. Efforts must be made to ensure that staff are aware of, understand and trust the whistleblowing avenues. In order for the Whistleblowing Policy to be effective, it must be underpinned by an organisational culture that is open, transparent and supportive of staff who bring unlawful or unethical behaviour or malpractice to the attention of management. Having a campaign to raise awareness of whistleblowing will assist in assuring people of this.

3.3 Choices (Options)

- 3.3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the content of this Report and advise the Monitoring Officer if it has any comments that it requests are taken into account by Officers during their forthcoming review of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy Statement and Procedure.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 The Report refers to a forthcoming Policy review but does not seek to change Policy.

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. There will be a resource required in terms of Officer time in conducting the review of the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 The law on whistleblowing is contained in the Employment Rights Act 1996 ('ERA') as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 ('PIDA'). The ERA was amended by PIDA to introduce protection for workers (including employees) who "blow the whistle" on wrongdoing at work. Workers have a right not to be dismissed or suffer detriment at work as a consequence of making a "protected disclosure".

4.4 Equality

- 4.4.1 There are no equality and diversity issues arising directly from this Report. However, full consideration will need to be given to equality and diversity issues in the review and implementation of a revised Whistleblowing Policy and any subsequent awareness raising campaign.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 Relevant consultees will be engaged as part of the review of the Whistleblowing Policy Statement and Procedure.

4.6 Other Implications

4.6.1 None

5. Background Papers

5.1 None

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer



Confidential Reporting Code

Whistleblowing Policy Statement and Procedure

Policy Owner	HR Policy and Projects Team
Effective date	March 2010 Reformatted December 2015
Review date	December 2016

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1. Policy Statement and Procedure

This policy statement and procedure is based on the model code developed by the Local Government Management Board. It complements the “Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees”. Paragraph 1.1 of the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees states: “Employees will be expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the appropriate level of management any deficiency in the provision of service. Employees must report to the appropriate manager, any impropriety or breach of procedure”. It should not be used to deal with matters more properly addressed by the Council’s Grievance Procedure. Nor should this policy be used in cases where there has been a failure of service delivery, which should be dealt with using the Council’s standard Complaints Procedure.

Throughout this procedure there is an assumption that in the first instance concerns will be raised internally either through line managers or other senior managers designated for the purpose. It is recognised, however, that in some circumstances employees may be reluctant for a variety of reasons to deal with the matter in this way (despite the safeguards described below). For that reason, an alternative, external reporting option has been provided. The various means by which you can raise concerns are set out within the procedure.

2. Policy Statement

As an employer of around 1600 people and serving a population of nearly 200,000 people, Northampton Borough Council is committed to the establishment of an effective Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, designed to:

- encourage prevention
- promote detection; and
- provide an effective means of confidential reporting and investigation.

The Council is determined to create an environment in which honesty and opposition to fraud can flourish. Any employee or Member suspected of fraudulent or corrupt activity may expect those suspicions to be reported, investigated and acted upon as appropriate.

It is the Council’s expectation that Members and employees will lead by example, acting in a proper manner at all times and abiding by the procedures, rules and safeguards put in place to protect the interests of the Council and those it serves. This expectation extends to contractors, suppliers and other external agencies with which the Council deals and any failures by such agencies to meet the standards required by the Council in this respect will be dealt with in the most rigorous manner.

The activities of the Council are subject already to a high level of external scrutiny by a number of bodies including:

- The Local Government Ombudsman
- Audit Commission and the District Auditor

- Central Government departments
- HM Customs and Excise
- Inland Revenue
- Service Users
- Voluntary Groups

However, it is in the interests of all concerned that further arrangements are put in hand to enable the disclosure of wrongdoing, malpractice, irregularity, fraud or corruption to be dealt with properly, quickly and effectively.

This Confidential Reporting Code is designed to enable employees to disclose allegations of malpractice. It is of course preferable, in the first instance at least, that such concerns be raised and dealt with effectively internally as this is more likely to strengthen the reputation of local government than either public disclosure or allowing malpractice. It is difficult to give an unambiguous definition of malpractice, but for the purposes of this Code, it includes a reasonable belief that one or more of the following has occurred or is likely to do so:

- conduct which is a criminal offence or a breach of law;
- disclosures related to miscarriages of justice;
- dangerous procedures risking the health, safety or welfare of other employees or members of the public;
- damage to the environment;
- unauthorised use of public funds;
- fraud or corruption;
- sexual or physical abuse of clients (such abuses of other employees is also addressed under the Council's Bullying and Harassment policies)
- other unethical conduct.

Any employee who suspects malpractice is being, or is likely to be committed, must feel able to raise those concerns in the clear and certain knowledge that the matter will be quickly and effectively investigated and without fear that "blowing the whistle" will leave them vulnerable to victimisation. It has to be borne in mind, however, that anybody lodging malicious and unfounded allegations may themselves be subject to disciplinary action subsequently.

A new range of protection is now provided to "whistleblowers" through the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. In summary the Act gives protection for employees disclosing information in the following circumstances:

Internal disclosure: where the discloser has an honest and reasonable suspicion that malpractice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.

Regulatory disclosure: to bodies with regulatory obligations such as the Health and Safety Executive, Inland Revenue and so forth. Here the test of reasonableness includes a requirement that the discloser must honestly and reasonably believe the information and any allegations in it to be substantially true.

Wider disclosure: for example to the police, media, MPs and so forth. In addition to the conditions set out above, the discloser must also not be making the allegations for personal gain. Also, other than in cases where the discloser reasonably believed they would be victimised or that the matter would be covered up, the matter should first have been raised with the employer or a regulator (where one exists) under this policy.

If, having reported their concerns, an employee is victimised in breach of the Act they may bring a claim for compensation to an Employment Tribunal. Such compensation will be uncapped and based on losses suffered.

3. Procedure - Part 1 (Employee Reporting)

The Council recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one. If what you are saying is true, you have nothing to fear as you will be acting properly on behalf of the Council and those who use its services.

You are encouraged to put your name to any allegation you may make as this brings a greater degree of credibility to the complaint than if made anonymously. The Council may, however, consider anonymous complaints at its discretion. That discretion will take account of:

- the seriousness of the issues raised
- the credibility of the concern
- the likelihood of being able to confirm the allegation from attributable sources.

All concerns will be treated in confidence. So far as is reasonably practicable your identity will be protected should you so wish. It has to be recognised, however, that in some circumstances (legal proceedings for example) you may be required to give formal evidence.

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns through standard line management (starting with your immediate supervisor/manager). However, if you believe your managers are involved in the activity in question you may approach the Chief Executive, Borough Treasurer, Borough Solicitor, Audit Services or one of the Council's Directors.

If for some reason you feel uncomfortable dealing directly with these colleagues you may want to seek support from a colleague, friend or trade union representative. Similarly, if you are required to attend any meetings or interviews to discuss your concerns you may wish one of this latter group to accompany you.

Although you are not required to prove beyond doubt that your concerns are well-founded, the more supporting evidence you can produce (diary of events for example) the more likely it is that further investigations can be conducted effectively and quickly.

Should circumstances be such that you feel wholly unable to raise your concerns internally there is a list of alternative routes set out in Appendix 1 to this procedure. These external bodies are well aware of the issues involved and will act as mediators in communication with the Borough Council.

4. Procedure- Part 2 (The Council's Response)

As appropriate to the nature of the complaint, the Council may:

- begin an investigation by management;
- initiate the disciplinary process;
- refer the matter to the police;
- refer the matter to the external auditors;
- initiate an independent inquiry.

Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation. If urgent action is required, this will be taken before any investigation is conducted.

Assuming you have not reported the matter anonymously or have not requested an external agency to withhold your name from the Borough Council you will receive within ten working days written confirmation that details of your concern have been received. You will also be advised as to:

- whether or not further information is required from you;
- how the Council proposes to deal with the matter;
- how long the Council estimates it will take to provide a final response;
- whether any initial enquiries have been made;
- whether further investigations will take place and, if not, why not.

The amount of contact you might expect to have with the person(s) considering the issues will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, you will be contacted for further information.

Where you are required to attend a meeting or interview this can be arranged away from your workplace if you wish and you may be accompanied by your trade union or professional association representative, colleague or friend.

In the event that you are required to give evidence in any disciplinary or criminal proceedings you will be given advice about the procedure.

Subject to any legal constraints you will be advised of the outcome of proceedings in order that you may be satisfied that the matter has been dealt with properly.

5. Conclusion

The Council obviously hopes that you will be satisfied with the outcome of its investigations under this procedure. However, if you are not, you may wish to

consider taking the matter further. See Appendix 1 for a suggested list of external contact points you can approach.

If you do decide to take the matter outside the Council, you should ensure that you do not disclose confidential information irrelevant to the matter(s) at hand. Check (or have checked on your behalf) with the Monitoring Officer (Borough Solicitor) if you have any doubts.

CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING CODE

District Auditor/Audit Commission

Trade Unions

CAB

Relevant professional bodies

Relevant voluntary organisations

Police

National Fraud hot-line

Members of Parliament

Regional political parties

Health and Safety Executive

Environment Agency

Department of Trade and Industry

Public body 'Concern at Work'

Members of European Parliament

Appendix
CES: 0



STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Work Plan for the Standards Committee
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	19 December 2016
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to ask Councillors to consider adopting a Work Plan for the Standards Committee.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Standards Committee asks the Working Group, *Councillor Training Strategy – Ethics and Governance*, to develop a draft Work Plan for the Standards Committee to be presented to the Standards Committee on 20 March 2017 for consideration and approval.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background and Issues

- 3.1.1 At its meeting on 14 September 2015 the Standards Committee set up the following two Working Groups:

- a) A Working Group to consider the Northampton Borough Council Members' Code of Conduct and the Arrangements for dealing with allegations of breaches of the Northampton Borough Council Members' Code of Conduct and of Codes of Conduct adopted by Parish Councils to formulate recommendations to Full Council regarding the revision of these documents and procedures. (Agenda item 6 refers.)

- b) A Working Group to consider the training requirements of all Members of the Council in relation to ethical and governance matters within the remit of the Standards Committee and devise a Training Strategy, which also includes consideration of the extent to which such training should be extended to Parish Councils within the Borough. (Agenda item 8 refers.)

3.1.2 To enable the Standards Committee to plan its workload it is suggested that a draft Work Plan for the Standards Committee for 2017/2018 is developed by the Standards Working Group and that the Work Plan takes into account the Governance Action Plan reported to the Audit Committee on 5 December 2016, in so far as the issues in the Plan refer to Standards/Ethics issues. It is recommended that the draft Work Plan is presented by the Chair of the Working Group to the next meeting of the Committee on 20 March 2017 for consideration and approval.

3.1.3 It is suggested that the work of the two Working Groups is included within the Standards Committee Work Plan for 2017/2018.

3.1.4 It is further suggested that Ethics, Governance and Cultural issues such as the items listed below are included in the Work Plan:

- Code of Conduct and Arrangements for investigating alleged breaches
- Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality
- Training Strategy for all Members of the Council in relation to ethical and governance matters
- Organisational Ethics and Culture
- Parish Councils
- A Communications Strategy to promote the work of the Standards Committee and the importance of ethical governance
- The refresh of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy
- Consideration of the CIPFA International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector in so far as it relates to the work of the Standards Committee

3.1.5 The Working Group will develop the above list into a detailed draft Work Plan and add any further items it considers appropriate.

3.1.6 The draft Standards Committee Work Plan will be presented to the Standards Committee at its meeting on 20 March 2017 for approval.

3.2 Choices

3.2.1 It is recommended that the Standards Committee asks the Working Group, *Councillor Training Strategy – Ethics and Governance*, to develop a draft Work

Plan for the Standards Committee to be presented to the Standards Committee on 20 March 2017 for consideration and approval

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 This report does not have any direct implications on Policy. Policy implications are set out in the body of this report.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 This report does not have any direct resource implications.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 The legal framework is outlined in the body of the report.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 Not applicable.

4.6 Other Implications

4.6.1 None

5. Background Papers

5.1 None.

**Tracy Tiff
Scrutiny Officer**