

REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE**MEETING DATE****22 JANUARY 2014****CLASSIFICATION:****Open****WARD(S) AFFECTED****None****CORPORATE DIRECTOR****Gifty Edila, Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Full Council adopted new governance arrangements at its meeting on 11th September 2013 to come into effect from the start of the 2014/15 municipal year. This report provides the Standards Committee with an update on expected changes to the workings of the Committee arising out of Full Council's decision.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Standards Committee is asked to note the report and comment on its proposed new terms of reference, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

3. BACKGROUND

Schedule of meetings

- 3.1 The Council commissioned Shared Intelligence (Si) to undertake a review of the Council's governance arrangements. One of Si's recommendations was that two meetings of the Standards Committee be scheduled each municipal year on the grounds that this would be sufficient to deal with the Committee's routine business.
- 3.2 This recommendation was agreed by Full Council on 11th September 2013 and as a consequence two ordinary meetings of the Committee will be scheduled for the next municipal year. Additional Committee meetings can be arranged if required to hear any complaints made under the Members' Code of Conduct. Sub-Committee meetings will continue to be arranged on an ad-hoc basis to assess and review any complaints made against Members and co-opted members.

Terms of Reference

- 3.3 Following Full Council's decision to adopt new governance arrangements, the Constitution is being updated to implement the agreed changes. As part of this process, all committee terms of reference have been reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose and up to date. Full Council is due to consider a report at its meeting on 26th February 2014 to agree the Constitutional changes and any changes to committee terms of reference.
- 3.4 Attached at Appendix 1 of this report are the terms of reference for the Standards Committee due to be proposed to Full Council. This Appendix tracks the changes proposed to the terms of reference.
- 3.5 On the whole, it was felt that the terms of reference could be more concise and consequently a number of the terms have been re-drafted and where it is proposed to delete an existing term, Appendix 1 explains under which new terms the deleted provisions are covered.
- 3.6 The only significant change proposed to the terms of reference is to remove from the Committee's responsibility for monitoring the Members' Enquiry Protocol and Corporate Complaints Procedure. Following the recommendation of the governance review that the Committee should meet twice a year, it is felt that the Committee's focus at these two meetings should be on ethical governance matters.

In addition, as these matters are executive functions, it is felt that the Members' Enquiries and Corporate Complaints should more appropriately be reported to Cabinet and the Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission.

3.7 A further change has been made to insert a new term to clarify that the Committee is responsible for adopting its own procedures for considering complaints made under the Members' Code of Conduct, codes of practice and protocols.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES

4.1 As the report is for noting there are no financial implications associated with this report. Any savings accrued through the reduction in meetings of the Standards Committee will contribute to the savings required by Governance Services for 2015/16 and future years.

5. COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, HR AND REGULATORY SERVICES

5.1 Full Council established the Standards Committee, with effect from 1st July 2012, to perform the obligations placed on the Council, by the Localism Act 2011, to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst Members and co-optees. The report makes recommendations in accordance with this duty.

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