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Terms of Reference

Standards Committee

The Standards Committee is responsible for promoting and maintaining high ethical standards at the Council. The Standards Committee is responsible for the following functions:

1. To review and maintain oversight of the Council's ethical framework and procedures and make reports and recommendations accordingly;
2. To review and maintain oversight of the conduct of councillors and co-opted members of the Council and assist them in upholding high ethical standards;
3. To advise Full Council and its Committees on the adoption of a Members' Code of Conduct, codes of practice and protocols relating to ethical governance matters;
4. To hear and consider complaints made against councillors and co-opted members under the Code of Conduct, codes of practice or protocols;
5. To adopt procedures for considering complaints made under the Code of Conduct, codes of practice or protocols;
6. To consider whether to grant applications for dispensation to councillors and co-opted Members, in accordance with Members' Code of Conduct; and
7. To maintain oversight of ethical governance training provided to Members and co-opted members and make reports and recommendations accordingly.

The quorum for the Standards Committee shall be 3 elected Councillors.

There are two sub-committees of the Standards Committee:

Standards Assessment Sub-Committee

To consider allegations that a member or co-opted member (herein referred to as Subject Member) has failed to comply with the Member's Code of Conduct as may be referred to the Assessment Sub-Committee by the Monitoring Officer to determine whether:

- (a) No further action should be taken because the complaint does not reach the required threshold;

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- (b) To refer the complaint for local resolution; or
- (c) To refer the complaint for formal investigation.

Quorum - The quorum of the Assessment Sub-Committee is three Councillor Members of the Standards Committee in a voting capacity.

Notes:

One or more Co-opted Members of Standards Committee will be invited to attend the Sub-Committee and contribute to the proceedings in a non voting capacity.

The Independent Person to Standards Committee will be invited to attend the Sub-Committee and contribute to the proceedings in a non voting capacity.

Any member of the Standards Committee, against whom a Code of Conduct complaint has been made, shall not be selected as a member of the Assessment Sub-Committee until consideration of their complaint has been concluded.

Where possible the composition of the Assessment Sub-Committee will be politically balanced.

Standards Hearing Sub-Committee

(a) To conduct hearings into allegations referred for formal investigation into an alleged breach of the Member Code of Conduct, whether initiated by either the Monitoring Officer or the Assessment Sub-Committee, concludes that there have been one or more failures to comply with the Member Code of Conduct and the Monitoring Officer has determined that the matter should be referred to the Hearing Sub-Committee for consideration.

(b) Where the Hearing Sub-Committee determines that the Subject Member has failed to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct to determine what, if any, lawful sanction should be imposed and where appropriate make recommendations as to sanction to full Council, the Elected Mayor, Group Leader or other persons.

(c) In consequence of the hearing and determination of any allegation to make such recommendations to full Council as the Hearing Sub-Committee considers appropriate having regard to the need to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst members.

Quorum - The quorum of the Hearing Sub-Committee is three Councillor Members of the Standards Committee In a voting capacity.

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Notes:

One or more Co-opted Members of the Standards Committee will be invited to attend the Sub-Committee and contribute to the proceedings in a non voting capacity.

The Independent Person to Standards Committee will be invited to attend the Sub-Committee and contribute to the proceedings in a non voting capacity.

Any member of the Standards Committee, against whom a Code of Conduct complaint has been made, shall not be selected as a member of the Hearing Sub-Committee until consideration of their complaint has been concluded.

Where possible the composition of the Hearing Sub-Committee will be politically balanced.