

Terms of Reference

Standards Committee

1. Purpose of the Committee

- 1.1 The Committee's principal roles are to promote high standards of ethical conduct within the council; to advise the Council on the adoption or revision of its Code of Conduct, and to monitor and review the Council's Constitution.
- 1.2 The Committee also undertakes council functions in relation to elections matters where these are not reserved to Full Council.

2. Committee Form and Structure

Composition

- 2.1 The Standards Committee will comprise 7 members in political balance. The Leader of the Council must not be a member of the Committee, and the membership may include no more than one Executive member.
- 2.2 Substitute members shall be allowed in accordance with Rule 2.4.7 of the Constitution (Part 4.1).
- 2.3 The Committee will co-opt two non-voting parish councillors from within the Guildford Borough, who are not also Guildford Borough Councillors, and who will serve until the next ordinary parish council elections.
- 2.4 At least one parish co-optee must be present when matters relating to parish councils or their members are being considered.
- 2.5 The Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed by Full Council annually. A member of the Executive may not chair the committee. If practicable, the Vice-Chair will be from a different political group from the Chair.
- 2.6 In the event of a vacancy in the position of Chair or Vice-Chair occurring during the year, the Committee may elect a replacement from a borough councillor amongst their number (provided that they are not a member of the Executive).

Meetings

- 2.7 The Standards Committee will normally meet four times per year.
- 2.8 The quorum of the Standards Committee will be 3 members, who must also be members of the Council.

Competency

- 2.9 All members and substitute members of the Standards Committee must:
- (a) undertake mandatory training in the relevant law and procedures which relate to the Committee's work; and
 - (b) undertake further mandatory training, on an ad hoc basis, when there are changes to procedure or relevant legislation that are deemed significant by the relevant Joint Strategic Director or the Joint Monitoring Officer.

3. Functions and responsibilities

Ethical standards framework

- 3.1 To assist the Council in fulfilling its duty under the Localism Act 2011 c.27(1) to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by borough and parish councillors.
- 3.2 To review the operation and effectiveness of the Code of Conduct and recommend any changes to the Council.
- 3.3 To support the Monitoring Officer in discharging their role in respect of standards of conduct and behaviour.
- 3.4 To advise the Council on its procedure for dealing with code of conduct complaints in respect of borough or parish councillors.
- 3.5 To deal with any member complaints referred to it by the Monitoring Officer, in accordance with the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Complaints against Members
- 3.6 To recommend to the Council the appointment of Independent Persons as required by the Localism Act 2011, on the advice of the Monitoring Officer.
- 3.7 To determine any request for a dispensation under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011, where not determined by the Monitoring Officer, or to hear an appeal against a determination made by the Monitoring Officer.
- 3.8 To respond on behalf of the Council to national reviews and consultations on standards related issues.
- 3.9 To receive an annual report from the Monitoring Officer on the local resolution of complaints, assessment of allegations and the system of registration of members interests.
- 3.10 To make an annual report to the Council on the performance of the Committee's functions.

Governance

- 3.11 To monitor and review the operation of the Council's Constitution and to make appropriate recommendations to Full Council in relation thereto.
- 3.12 To discharge the Council's functions in relation to elections, in so far as these are not reserved to Full Council or another decision maker.
- 3.13 To monitor and review the Member development programme, including training on the Members' Code of Conduct, to ensure it is comprehensive, robust and supports members to deliver their roles.

4. Proceedings

- 4.1 Meetings of the Standards Committee will proceed in accordance with the Council and Committee Procedure Rules at Part 4 of this Constitution.