

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

27 MARCH 2017

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

A.5 STANDARDS COMMITTEE - ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

(Report prepared by Lisa Hastings, Monitoring Officer)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To agree a work programme for 2017/18.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Standards Framework comprises of:

- The Members' Code of Conduct (contained within the Members' Constitution Booklet);
- The Monitoring Officer Protocol (contained within the Members' Constitution Booklet);
- The Independent Persons' Protocol (contained within the Members' Constitution Booklet);
- Member and Officer Relations Protocol (contained within the Members' Constitution Booklet); and
- The Complaints Procedure (contained within the Members' Constitution Booklet).

These documents collectively fulfil the Council's statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct and to building public confidence by demonstrating a commitment to maintaining positive behaviours in relation to all seven principles of public life.

The overall approach of the arrangements is to seek:

- Information and training for Members and Officers to increase awareness and support good standards of behaviour;
- Proportionality – responses to complaints which are proportionate to their seriousness;
- Timeliness – with clear timescales for the various stages of complaints to be progressed;
- Checks, balances, reporting requirements and delegation to the Monitoring Officer of key elements of the process to maximise independence from the political process; and
- Early and informal intervention to resolve complaints wherever possible (including an expectation that Group Leaders will play a key role).

The Arrangements were adopted by full Council in November 2013, and elements have been reviewed in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 to ensure that the procedures and protocols are robust, up to date and fit for purpose. The Members' Code of Conduct is currently being reviewed.

To enable the Committee to focus on promoting high standards of conduct as well as reacting to complaints it is considered appropriate to discuss and agree a work programme for the Committee for 2017/18. A draft is enclosed as **Appendix 1**.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standards Committee note the contents of the report and agree the annual work programme for 2017/18, as set out in Appendix 1, subject to the Committee's comments or amendments through debate.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Draft work programme for 2017/18