

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Your attendance is requested at a meeting to be held in The Jeffrey Room,
The Guildhall, St. Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE on
Monday, 19 March 2018 at 5:00 pm.

S Bovey
Interim Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. MINUTES
The Standards Committee to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2017.
3. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
5. CODE OF CONDUCT ARRANGEMENTS - COMPLAINTS
The Standards Committee to consider a report regarding Code of Conduct Arrangements – Complaints.
6. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION: REVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS
7. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE 2017/2018
The Standards Committee to consider and approve its Annual Report 2017/2018.
8. WORK PLAN FOR 2018/2019
The Standards Committee to consider and approve its Work Plan for 2018/2019.
9. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED
10. 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.

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, 18 December 2017

PRESENT: Councillor Patel (Chair); Councillor Oldham (Deputy Chair); Councillors Bottwood, Marriott and Smith; and Kim Holland and Roger Rumsey (Independent Member Co-Optees)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Kilbride, B Markham and C Russell.

At this point the Chair welcomed Roger Rumsey, Independent Member Co-Optee to his first meeting on the Committee.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2017 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

3. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

5. RECRUITMENT OF PARISH COUNCILLOR CO OPTees TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE.

The Standards Committee was apprised of the applications and recent interviews that had taken place for the vacancy of co-optees to the Committee – Parish Councillors.

The Chair advised that three interviews had been held for the role of Parish Councillor Co-Optee. The Standards Working Group had felt that two of the applicants (Applicants B and C) should be recommended to the roles of Parish Councillor Co Optee; it did not recommend the other applicant for the vacancies. It was suggested that Applicants B and C are offered the role of Parish Councillor Co-Optee to the Standards Committee. The roles would formally commence from 1 January 2018.

6. CODE OF CONDUCT AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR INVESTIGATING ALLEGED BREACHES

The Solicitor explained the proposed changes to the administration for the Arrangements for investigating alleged breaches.

The Standards Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- There is a need for both the complainant and subject Member to receive updates regarding the progress of the complaint. The Scrutiny Officer explained the process to the Committee.
- The Committee felt that it should always be the aim to resolve the complaint within 28

days but explanations should be provided why the process is taking longer if this is the case.

Resolved: That:

- (1) The proposed streamlined arrangements for investigating alleged breaches of the Members Code of Conduct are approved.
- (2) The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer makes the arrangements for updating and publishing the arrangements for investigating alleged breaches of the Members Code of Conduct.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT ARRANGEMENTS COMPLAINTS

The Committee received a report detailing statistics in relation to Code of Conduct Arrangements Complaints.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- In response to a query regarding the involvement of the Standards Committee in the complaints process; Members were advised that if local resolution is not appropriate or it isn't possible to achieve a resolution, The Monitoring Officer will report the Investigating Officer's report to a Hearing Panel which will conduct a local hearing to decide whether the Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct.
- The Standards Committee can also ask questions regarding statistical reports on complaints to its meetings
- A Member commented that on a recent occasion a complaint had been made and the Committee had been copied into the complaint by the complainant; in such further instances it would be useful for the Committee to be updated on progress.
- There is a need for more regular updates on statistics

Resolved: That:

- (1) The statistical data in relation to the number of complaints received and dealt with is noted.
- (2) Statistical data in relation to the number of complaints received and dealt with is presented to the Committee at each meeting.

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

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 5:30 pm

M8492

Appendices: 0



STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	STATISTICS – CODE OF CONDUCT ARRANGEMENTS COMPLAINTS
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	19 March 2018
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to report on the statistics regarding the number of complaints received, and dealt with, in respect of the Code of Conduct Arrangements for the Committee for its information.
- 1.2 At its meeting of 18 December 2017, the Standards Committee requested that statistical information is presented to each meeting of the Committee; with updates on the live complaints, new complaints and complaints that have been actioned and closed since the last meeting.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 To note the statistics in relation to the number of complaints received, and dealt with, in respect of the Code of Conduct Arrangements.
- 2.2 That statistical data in relation the number of complaints received, and dealt with, in respect of the Code of Conduct Arrangements is presented to each meeting of the Committee.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background and Issues

- 3.1.1 It was resolved at the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 17 July 2017 that information regarding the number of complaints received, and dealt with, in respect of the Code of Conduct Arrangements for the Committee for its information at its October meeting.

- 3.1.2 Statistical data in relation to the number of complaints received and dealt with in respect of the Code of Conduct Arrangements was received by the Standards Committee at its meeting in October 2017.
- 3.1.3 The Committee requested that this data is elaborated upon to include further statistics regarding the complaints, such as the time taken to resolve the complaints and the outcomes of each complaint.
- 3.1.4 Further information was provided to the Standards Committee at its December 2017 meeting.
- 3.1.5 Data has been provided regarding complaints that are still live, have been closed since the December 2017 meeting and details of complaints received since the December 2017 meeting/

2016/2017

Complaints against a Parish Councillor

(a)

The complaint was received on 23 January 2017 and is currently the subject of an investigation. The file was closed on 31 January 2018.

The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that the complaint should be referred to investigation. An investigator was appointed. The investigator resolved that there had been no breach of the Code of one Parish Councillors, but there had been a technical breach by one Parish Councillor. The Monitoring Officer and Independent Person in considering the Investigator's report, concluded that the complaint should be dealt with by alternative resolution. The Parish Councillor has been asked to apologise to the complainant.

(b)

The complaint was received on 23 March 2017 and the file is still open.

The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that the complaint would be referred to an investigation. The investigation has taken place and the Investigator's final report is awaited.

Complaint against a Borough Councillor

2017/2018

Borough Councillor

(i)

The complaint was received on 25 March 2017. The file is still open.

The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that the complaint is held in abeyance pending the outcome of a separate investigation.

(ii)

The complaint was received on 13 September 2017. The file was closed on 20 December 2017.

The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that the complaint would be referred to an investigation. An Investigator has been appointed. The Investigator determined that the complaint should be dealt with by alternative resolution. The subject Member provided a written apology to the complainant.

(iii)

The complaint was received on 17 November 2017. The file was closed on 19 December 2017.

The initial assessment was held and the determination of this was that the complaint should be dealt with by alternative resolution. The subject Member provided a written apology to the complainant.

3.2 Choices

3.2.1 Members are asked to note the information provided.

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 Complaints received are in accordance with 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

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 Complaints received in respect of 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

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

Appendices:



STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Stakeholder Consultation: Review of Local Government Ethical Standards:
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	19 March 2018
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the draft responses to the consultation of the Government Committee on Standards in Public Life on local government ethical standards for the Standards Committee to the Committee for its consideration and approval. The Committee's response will then be submitted to the Government Committee on Standards in Public Life.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the draft responses to the consultation of the Government Committee on Standards in Public Life on local government ethical standards, as detailed at paragraph 3.1.6 of this report.
- 2.2 To ask the Monitoring Officer to submit the Standards Committee's responses to the consultation of the Government Committee on Standards in Public Life on local government ethical standards to the Government Committee on Standards in Public Life.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background and Issues

- 3.1.1 At its meeting held on 19 December 2016, the Standards Committee set up a Working Group to put together a draft Work Plan for the Standards Committee for 2017/2018. The Working Group consists of Councillors Patel, Oldham, Smith and B Markham. The establishment of a Work Plan will ensure that the

Committee can meet all of its responsibilities and obligations during the year. Included within the draft Work Plan is an item Stakeholder Consultation: Review of Local Government Ethical Standards (19 March 2018 meeting.)

3.1.2 The Standards Working Group, at its meeting on 15 February 2018 considered the terms of reference for the Stakeholder Consultation:

Examine the structures, processes and practices in local government in England for:

- a. Maintaining codes of conduct for local councillors;
- b. Investigating alleged breaches fairly and with due process;
- c. Enforcing codes and imposing sanctions for misconduct;
- d. Declaring interests and managing conflicts of interest; and
- e Whistleblowing.

Assess whether the existing structures, processes and practices are conducive to high standards of conduct in local government;

Make any recommendations for how they can be improved; and

Note any evidence of intimidation of councillors, and make recommendations for any measures that could be put in place to prevent and address such intimidation

3.1.3 The review will consider all levels of local government in England, including town and parish councils, principal authorities, combined authorities (including Metro Mayors) and the Greater London Authority (including the Mayor of London).

3.1.4 Local government ethical standards are a devolved issue. The Committee's remit does not enable it to consider ethical standards issues in devolved nations in the UK except with the agreement of the relevant devolved administrations. However, the Committee welcomes any evidence relating to local government ethical standards in the devolved nations of the UK, particularly examples of best practice, for comparative purposes.

3.1.5 Submissions will be published online alongside the Committee's final report, with any contact information (for example, email addresses) removed.

3.1.6 **Consultation questions and draft responses proposed by the Standards Working Group (Work Plan)**

- a. **Are the existing structures, processes and practices in place working to ensure high standards of conduct by local councillors? If not, please say why.**

There good processes and procedures in place at NBC; Councillors are trained, briefed and aware of the code of conduct and any relevant Legislation to adhere to

b. What, if any, are the most significant gaps in the current ethical standards regime for local government?

None

c. Are local authority adopted codes of conduct for councillors clear and easily understood? Do the codes cover an appropriate range of behaviours? What examples of good practice, including induction processes, exist?

Yes at Northampton, the code of conduct is adopted, and it is very clear and easy for Councillors to understand. It clearly covers a range of behaviours. A full induction process is held after Councillors are elected, returning Councillors are encouraged to attend the training session on Ethical Government which is externally delivered by experts. The Standards Committee has its own Training Strategy too which centres around ethical governance – the Strategy is for all Members, not just members of the Standards Committee.

A local authority has a statutory duty to ensure that its adopted code of conduct for councillors is consistent with the Seven Principles of Public Life and that it includes appropriate provision (as decided by the local authority) for registering and declaring councillors' interests. Are these requirements appropriate as they stand? If not, please say why.

The Nolan Seven Principles of Public Life:

- Selflessness:
- Integrity:
- Objectivity:
- Accountability
- Openness:
- Honesty:
- Leadership:

These requirements are appropriate

Are allegations of councillor misconduct investigated and decided fairly and with due process?

- i. What processes do local authorities have in place for investigating and deciding upon allegations? Do these**

processes meet requirements for due process? Should any additional safeguards be put in place to ensure due process?

Northampton has an adopted Arrangements process that it adheres to which do meet due process

- ii. **Is the current requirement that the views of an Independent Person must be sought and taken into account before deciding on an allegation sufficient to ensure the objectivity and fairness of the decision process? Should this requirement be strengthened? If so, how?**

A great benefit of the Localism Act was the introduction of Independent Persons. NBC has two Independent Persons. The Independent Persons are consulted on appropriately at Northampton and ensures the objectivity and fairness of the decision making process. There is no need to strengthen

- iii. **Monitoring Officers are often involved in the process of investigating and deciding upon code breaches. Could Monitoring Officers be subject to conflicts of interest or undue pressure when doing so? How could Monitoring Officers be protected from this risk?**

Very rarely there is a conflict of interest for the Monitoring Officer, but if the Monitoring Officer is involved in the issue that is subject to complaint, they could be conflicted and therefore alternative investigation is used, i.e. the Monitoring Officer's representative.

Are existing sanctions for councillor misconduct sufficient?

- i. **What sanctions do local authorities use when councillors are found to have breached the code of conduct? Are these sanctions sufficient to deter breaches and, where relevant, to enforce compliance?**

Current sanctions include apologies and training. These are relevant. Councillors abide by the sanctions.

Should local authorities be given the ability to use additional sanctions? If so, what should these be? No, the current system works very well

Are existing arrangements to declare councillors' interests and manage conflicts of interest satisfactory? If not please say why.

The arrangements are satisfactory but the need to provide guidance and training when Councillors are first elected is imperative.

- ii. **A local councillor is under a legal duty to register any pecuniary interests (or those of their spouse or partner), and cannot participate in discussion or votes that engage a disclosable pecuniary interest, nor take any further steps in relation to that matter, although local authorities can grant dispensations under certain circumstances. Are these statutory duties appropriate as they stand?**

The arrangements are satisfactory but the need to provide guidance and training when Councillors are first elected is imperative.

- iii. **What arrangements do local authorities have in place to declare councillors' interests, and manage conflicts of interest that go beyond the statutory requirements? Are these satisfactory? If not, please say why.**

The arrangements are satisfactory but the need to provide guidance and training when Councillors are first elected is imperative.

What arrangements are in place for whistleblowing, by the public, councillors, and officials? Are these satisfactory

The Authority has recently adopted a new whistleblowing policy, manned by external organisation. The effectiveness of the Policy will be monitored by the Standards Committee

What steps could *local authorities* take to improve local government ethical standards?

The standards are currently adequate but the need for training at the appropriate time is key

What steps could *central government* take to improve local government ethical standards?

The standards are currently adequate

What is the nature, scale, and extent of intimidation towards local councillors?

- i. **What measures could be put in place to prevent and address this intimidation?**

Councillors are subjected to intimidation on occasions; the issue is personal to the Councillor. Often there will be the need to involve the Police or the Monitoring Officer depending upon the nature, scale and extent of the intimidation. There are Laws in place to assist the Councillor should they be subjected to intimidation.

3.2 Choices

3.2.1 Members are asked to approve the draft responses to the consultation of the Government Committee on Standards in Public Life on local government ethical standards.

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 There are no legal implications arising directly from this 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 Report and Minutes – Draft responses draft responses to the consultation of the Government Committee on Standards in Public Life on local government ethical standards for the Standards Committee, Standards Working Group (Work Plan) – 15 February 2018.

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

Appendices: 1



STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Annual Report 2017/2018 for the Standards Committee
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	19 March 2018
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the draft Annual Report 2017/2018 for the Standards Committee to the Committee for its consideration and approval.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the draft Annual Report 2017/2018 for the Standards Committee at Appendix 1.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background and Issues

- 3.1.1 At its meeting held on 19 December 2016, the Standards Committee set up a Working Group to put together a draft Work Plan for the Standards Committee for 2017/2018. The Working Group consists of Councillors Patel, Oldham, Smith and B Markham. The establishment of a Work Plan will ensure that the Committee can meet all of its responsibilities and obligations during the year. It is seen as good practice for the Standards Committee to produce an annual Work Plan and an Annual Report.
- 3.1.2 The Standards Working Group, at its meeting on 15 February 2018 considered the draft Annual Report 2017/2018 for the Standards Committee that includes a number of issues and priorities that the Committee had addressed over the course of the year. The Working Group agreed that the

draft Annual Report 2017/2018 at Appendix 1 would be presented to the Standards Committee at its meeting on 19 March 2018 for approval.

3.2 Choices

3.2.1 Members are asked to approve the draft Annual Report 2017/2018 for the Standards Committee at Appendix 1 of this 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 There are no legal implications arising directly from this 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 Report and Appendix – Draft Annual Report 2017/2018 for the Standards Committee, Standards Working Group (Work Plan) – 15 February 2018.

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

Standards Committee Annual Report 2017/2018

A Message from Councillor Suresh Patel, Chair, Standards Committee **DRAFT**

This is the first Annual Report of the Standards Committee. It has been an extremely busy year for the Standards Committee. Instead of a complete commentary of all that Standards has achieved over the year this Annual Report provides a summary of the key highlights of the work Standards has been engaged in during 2017/2018

The Standards Committee promotes and maintains high standards of conduct. The Members of the Standards Committee have a common interest in that they believe in principled local politics and value their role as champions of high standards of conduct amongst local politicians.

In summary the work of the Standards Committee includes:

- Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct
- Assisting Councillors and Co-Opted Members to observe Northampton Borough Council's Code of Conduct
- Monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct
- Work through its Working Group (Work Plan)
- Producing and adopting a Training Strategy – Ethical and Governance Matters- Ethical Governance, Whistle Blowing and Complaints Handling

I would like to thank everyone for their endeavour to uphold these standards. My thanks are particularly extended to the Independent Persons for their input into Code of Conduct complaints.

I am also delighted to welcome our co-optees that joined the Standards Committee during 2017/2018.

It is clear that maintaining good standards of conduct is taken seriously by the Council. The Standards Committee believes that this can only serve to improve public confidence.



Councillor Suresh Patel
Chair, Standards Committee

Standards Committee Annual Report 2017/2018

Introduction

The Council has a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Co-Opted Members and the Council aims to have the highest possible ethical standards in place across the Council.

Membership of the Standards Committee 2017/2018

The Standards Committee comprises 9 Borough Councillor Members, 2 Parish Council Co Opted Members and 2 Independent Co-opted Members:

Borough Councillors

Councillor Suresh Patel (Chair)

Councillor Brian Oldham (Deputy Chair)

Councillors Alan Bottwood, Andrew Kilbride, Brian Markham, Les Marriott, Nilesh Parekh, Catherine Russell, Zoe Smith

Co Optees – Parish Councillors

Councillor Linda Hook

Councillor David Lewis

Co-Optees – Independent Members

Kim Holland

Roger Rumsey

Independent Persons

Under the Localism Act 2011, the Council was required to appoint one or more Independent Persons to assist in the Standards process. The functions of the Independent Persons are:

- they must be consulted by the authority and their views taken into account before the authority makes a finding as to whether a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct or decides on action to be taken in respect of that member. (This means that their views must be sought on a decision to take no action where the investigation finds no evidence of breach or, where the investigation finds evidence that there has been a breach, on any local resolution of the complaint, or on any finding of breach and on any decision on action as a result of that finding);
- they may be consulted by the authority in respect of a standards complaint at any other stage; and
- they may be consulted by a member or co-opted member of the Borough Council or of a Parish Council against whom a complaint has been made.

Standards Committee Annual Report 2017/2018

In June 2013 the Council appointed the following Independent Persons:

Peter Glover. Prior to retiring in 2010, Peter Glover had a thirty year career with Northamptonshire Police Force during which time he gained experience of dealing with a variety of public bodies. As a senior police officer, Peter Glover gained extensive experience of undertaking disciplinary procedures and interpreting law and policy guidelines.

Alan Haynes. Alan Haynes qualified as a Chartered Engineer and had various roles in the railway industry, including roles associated with Health and Safety. Alan Haynes retired in 2006 and since 2010 has been the Northamptonshire Chair of the Independent Panel for Councillors' Allowances (the "IPCA"). In addition to the direct experience of local authorities gained through sitting on the IPCA, Alan Haynes encountered a variety of different public bodies in the course of his career in the railway industry.

During 2017/2018 the Independent Persons have been involved in 11 cases, some of which were carried over from 2016/2017.

Code of Conduct

Complaints about councillors are dealt with as part of the council's standards process.

The Localism Act 2011 has changed the standards regime in local government. These changes came into effect from 1st July 2012. The council is in the process of updating the information on its website to reflect this new situation.

The council has recently agreed a new code of conduct for borough councillors and new arrangements for dealing with complaints against councillors.

This council's arrangements for dealing with complaints against councillors also apply to complaints made about parish councillors within the borough of Northampton.

Each parish council is responsible for adopting a code of conduct for its parish councillors. If you wish to view a parish council's code of conduct, you should inspect any website operated by the parish council and request the parish clerk to allow you to inspect the parish council's code of conduct.

During 2017/2018 the Standards Committee undertook a review of the Arrangements for dealing with complaints in accordance with the Code of Conduct and made some changes.

Standards Committee Annual Report 2017/2018

Code of Conduct Complaints

During 2017/2018 the number of complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct were as follows:

Borough Councillor

(i)

The complaint was received on 25 March 2017. The file is still open. The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that the complaint is held in abeyance pending the outcome of a separate investigation.

(ii)

The complaint was received on 4 September 2017. The file was closed on 7 November 2017.

The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that the complaint should be dealt with by alternative resolution, a facilitated discussion between the Monitoring Officer's representative, the complainant and the complainant's representative took place.

(iii)

The complaint was received on 20 September 2017. The file was closed on 17 October 2017.

The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that this matter did not warrant any formal action.

(iv)

The complaint was received on 13 September 2017. The file is still live.

The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that the complaint would be referred to an investigation. An Investigator has been appointed and the report is awaited.

(v)

The complaint was received on 17 November 2017. The file was closed on 20 December 2017.

The initial assessment has been held recently and the determination of this was that the complaint should be dealt with by alternative resolution. The subject Member was asked to provide a written apology to the complainant.

Standards Committee Annual Report 2017/2018

Parish Councillor

(vi)

The complaint was received on 2 May 2017. The file was closed on 23 May 2017.

The determination of the initial assessment of the complaint was that this matter did not warrant any formal action.

(vii)

The complaint was received on 3 July 2017. The file was closed on 6 July 2017.

The complaint was outside the scope of the Arrangements. The complainant was advised to redirect their complaint to the Parish Council

Work of the Standards Committee during 2017/2018

During the year the Standards Committee has met four times. Its work consisted of:

Approval of the first Work Plan of the Standards Committee

Approval of the first Annual Report of the Standards Committee

Approval of the first Training Strategy for the Standards Committee

Approval of the first Communication Strategy for the Standards Committee

Setting up its Working Group (Work Plan) that has the following Terms of Reference:

To produce a draft Work Plan for the Standards Committee for the Municipal Year 2017/2018 for the approval of the Standards Committee.

To suggest items for inclusion on the agenda of meetings of the Standards Committee, based on the content of the Work Plan.

To action items on the Work Plan, as necessary, prior to, or following, their consideration by the Standards Committee; this will include carrying out reviews, commenting on draft Strategies, Policies, Codes and other Council documents within the remit of the Standards Committee.

Review of the Whistleblowing Policy

Recruitment of Co-Optees (Parish Councillors and Independent) to the Committee

Approval of Gifts and Hospitality – Guidance for Councillors

Approval of the Employee's Code of Conduct

Updates on the current status of live complaints and complaints closed since the previous update

Approval of the Work Plan for the Committee for 2018/2019

Standards Committee Annual Report 2017/2018

Training and Development

In accordance with its Training Strategy – Ethical and Governance Standards; training regarding:

Code of Conduct

Declaration of Interest

Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality

The session was delivered by a Senior Solicitor of the Council and excellent feedback was received from those in attendance, which included Borough Councillors, Parish Councillors and co optees to the Standards Committee.

In accordance with issues listed on the Training Strategy, further sessions are planned for the year 2018/2019

Future Activity

The Work Plan for 2017/2018 will including standing annual items but will evolve as necessary during the year; taking into account any developing issues pertaining to standards.

Standards Committee Annual Report 2017/2018

If English is not your first language and you need help in translating this document please contact Tracy Tiff on 01604 837408.

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Haddii afka Ingriisigu aanu ahayn luuqad-daada kowaad oo aad u baahan-tahay in lagaa caawiyo turjumidda warqaddan fadlan kala xidhidh Tracy Tiff tilifoonka 01604 837408

如果英語不是你的主要說用語言而需要幫助將這份文件翻譯，請致電 01604 837408 向 Tracy Tiff 提出要求。

যদি ইংরেজী আপনার মাতৃভাষা না হয় এবং এই দলিলটি অনুবাদে আপনার সাহায্যের দরকার হয় তবে অনুগ্রহ করে ট্রেইসি টিফ-এর সাথে 01604 837408 এই টেলিফোন নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন।

LARGE PRINT AND TAPE

If you would like this document as large print or as a tape recording please call 01604 837408

Appendices: 1



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Work Plan 2018/2019 for the Standards Committee
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	19 March 2018
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the draft Work Plan 2018/2019 for the Standards Committee to the Committee for its consideration and approval.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the draft Work Plan 2018/2019 for the Standards Committee at Appendix 1.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background and Issues

- 3.1.1 At its meeting held on 19 December 2016, the Standards Committee set up a Working Group to put together a draft Work Plan for the Standards Committee for 2017/2018. The Working Group consists of Councillors Patel, Oldham, Smith and B Markham. The establishment of a Work Plan will ensure that the Committee can meet all of its responsibilities and obligations during the year. It is seen as good practice for the Standards Committee to produce an annual Work Plan and an Annual Report.
- 3.1.2 The Standards Working Group, at its meeting on 15 February 2018 considered the draft Work Plan 2018/2019 for the Standards Committee that includes a number of issues and priorities that the Committee had addressed over the course of the year. The Working Group agreed that the draft Work

Plan 2018/2019 at Appendix 1 would be presented to the Standards Committee at its meeting on 19 March 2018 for approval.

3.2 Choices

3.2.1 Members are asked to approve the draft Work Plan 2018/2019 for the Standards Committee at Appendix 1 of this 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 There are no legal implications arising directly from this 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 Report and Appendix – Draft Work Plan 2018/2019 for the Standards Committee, Standards Working Group (Work Plan) – 15 February 2018.

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer



**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
STANDARDS COMMITTEE – WORK PLAN 2018/2019**

Topic Area DRAFT	Rationale	Responsibility	Anticipated Meeting Date (s) of Standards Committee
Work Plan 2018/2019 for the Standards Committee	To approve the Work Plan 2018/2019 for the Standards Committee	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	March 2018
Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2017/2018	To approve the Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2017/2018	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	March 2018
Register Gifts and Hospitality (Members and Officers)	To receive details regarding the declarations of gifts and hospitality of Members and Officers during 2017/2018	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	June 2018
Code of Conduct and arrangements for investigating alleged breaches	To receive details of complaints received in respect of alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	March 2018 June 2018 September 2018 December 2018



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STANDARDS COMMITTEE – WORK PLAN 2018/2019**

Topic Area	Rationale	Responsibility	Anticipated meeting date (s)
Organisational Ethics and Culture	To receive an update on the Organisational Change Programme and to comment and input into that Programme into Ethical Conduct Matters.	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	As appropriate
Training Strategy - Ethical and Governance Matter	To review the Standards Committee's Training Strategy for all Members of the Council in relation to ethical and governance matters and specific training for Members of the Standards Committee.	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	September 2018
Ethical and Governance Matters Training	To receive a briefing on training that has taken place for all Members on ethical and governance matters	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	September 2018
Communications Strategy	To review the Standards Committee's Communications Strategy that promotes the work of the Standards Committee and the importance of ethical governance.	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	December 2018



**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
STANDARDS COMMITTEE – WORK PLAN 2018/2019**

Topic Area	Rationale	Responsibility	Anticipated meeting date (s)
Whistleblowing Policy	To review the effectiveness of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure and its implementation.	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	December 2018
CIPFA International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector	The Committee to receive briefings on the CIPFA International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector in so far as it relates to the work of the Standards Committee.	The Standards Committee	As required
Annual Report of the Standards Committee	To receive the Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2018/2019 to include update about delivery of the Work Plan and monitoring data	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	March 2019
Work Plan 2018/2019 for the Standards Committee	To approve the Work Plan 2019/2020 for the Standards Committee	Standards Working Group The Standards Committee	March 2019

NB: The approval of a Work Plan for the Standards Committee will not affect the responsibility or discretion of the Committee during the year, as the Committee can, at subsequent meetings, agree to update the Work Plan, if it is necessary to do so.