

Standards Committee – 24th March 2014

Agenda Item No. 5

Issues raised by members and interested parties during the Committee's consideration of the
Independent Review of the Council's Standards Arrangements

- the perception that the Standards Committee needed to be more independent of the Council
- the importance of minimising the timescale for dealing with code of conduct complaints
- the need for transparency in the complaints process
- the non-voting position of non-elected members on the Standards Committee and its Panels
- the potential delay in member involvement in the proposed revised process
- the communication of information to the parties involved in each case
- the introduction of, and adherence to, specific timeframes for conducting formal investigations
- the availability and appropriateness of training for members of the Standards Committee
 - the case for such training being mandatory
- the future review of any revised arrangements that might be introduced
- the enhanced role of the Independent Person in the proposed process
- the absence of any right of appeal
- the publicising of decisions made in relation to code of conduct complaints
- the feasibility of scheduling of meetings and extending the pool of members that can be drawn upon
- the exclusion of the complainant and the respondent from the initial stages of the complaints process
- the communication of decisions to the interested parties
- the availability of appropriate guidance for persons submitting complaints
- the supporting role of the Independent Person in the initial stages of the proposed revised process
- the existing and proposed sanctions following standards hearings, where further action is considered necessary
- the application to the process of the principles for public life established in the Localism Act 2011
- the Council's progressive and non-partisan approach to standards issues
- the forum for consideration of code of conduct complaints and whether this should engage the entire Standards Committee
- the current role of the Monitoring Officer in relation to the complaints process and the proposal that the Monitoring Officer should be responsible for the initial determination as to whether further action is required
- the confidentiality of the "decision-making process" in relation to code of conduct and the publicising of decisions
- the availability of a simple flowchart explain the decision-making process