

*“Round-table” discussions of Hoey-Ainscough’s proposed  
Standards procedure for SBC – held on 17<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014*

*Summary of the major issues agreed to be referred to  
the Standards Committee for further consideration or endorsement*

**Initial assessment of complaint**

- the initial assessment of complaints should continue to be determined by a Panel of councillors with an Independent Person and Lay/Parish Representatives where appropriate
- the membership of the Standards Committee should be increased to facilitate a greater pool of members that can be drawn upon for Assessment panel meetings and to assist in avoiding any unnecessary delay in this initial phase of the process.

*(Note – the membership of the Standards Committee was increased at the Annual Council Meeting in June 2014)*

- Assessment Panel meetings to either be scheduled throughout the Municipal Year and convened or cancelled as necessary to deal with submitted complaints or continue to be convened on an ad hoc basis.

**Transparency of decision**

- proceedings at the initial stage of the complaint should remain private and confidential.
- neither the complainant or the respondent should be allowed to attend Assessment Panel meetings but both should be advised “asap” of the date when the Assessment Panel will meet to consider the complaint.
- Standards Committee to consider the extent to which statistical data on the number and outcome of complaints should be publicised having regard to existing officer workloads and commitments.

**Appeals**

- that, in relation to Assessment Panel decisions, the current practice of no right to appeal should be continued
  - that the issue of right of appeal in relation to Assessment Panel determinations be the subject of regular review

**Other**

- That members be encouraged to make themselves available so as to enable the completion of the initial assessment of a complaint within a period of one calendar month from receipt of the complaint.

- That the Investigating Officer be encouraged to adopt a more robust approach in gathering information from complainants and respondents in a timely manner and in accordance with a target timeframe for completion of the investigation and submission of the Investigation Report to the Standards Assessment Panel.
- That it is recognised that delays will inevitably occur and that, in such circumstances, officers ensure that complainants and respondents are kept fully advised of the position