

## **Summary Sheet**

### **Name of Committee and Date of Committee Meeting**

Standards and Ethics Committee - 14 June 2018

### **Report Title**

Annual Report

### **Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

No

### **Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Judith Badger, Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Service

### **Report Author(s)**

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### **Ward(s) Affected**

All

### **Executive Summary**

A report setting the work undertaken by the Standards Committee in the municipal year 2017/2018.

### **Recommendations**

That the Committee notes the work undertaken by the Standards and Ethics Committee in the municipal year 2017/2018.

### **List of Appendices Included**

None

### **Background Papers**

Previous Agendas and Minutes of Standards Committee meetings

### **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

None

### **Council Approval Required**

No

### **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Annual Report**

### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the Committee notes the work undertaken in the municipal year 2017/2018.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 This report summarises the work undertaken by the Standards Committee during the Municipal Year 2017/2018.
- 2.2 In June 2017 the Committee received reports in respect of proposed changes to the Council's Standing Orders [now referred to as the Council Procedure Rules and on the work done by the Working Group appointed by the Committee to review the Council's Code of Conduct and associated procedures. The amendments to Standing Orders were subsequently approved by Council. The Committee agreed amendments to the Procedure for considering complaints proposed by the Working Group.
- 2.3 In September 2017 the Committee received reports about the outcome of a hearing about an alleged breach of the code of conduct and updates on training and developments in standards.
- 2.4 In January 2018 the Committee received reports about the outcome of a hearing into an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct and a review of the Order of Proceedings for hearings. The Committee resolved to censure councillor who had been found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct and for this to be reported to the Leader of the majority group on the Council. The Committee noted the issue of how councillors were using social media and suggested a training session be dedicated to this subject in the future.
- 2.5 In May 2018 the Committee received a further report about the Order of Proceedings for hearings and reports about the membership of the Committee, the Work Plan for 2018/19 and the Committee on Standards in Public Life's consultation on its review of ethical standards in local government. The Committee agreed to form a small Working Group to prepare a response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life's consultation.
- 2.6 The Committee asked Council to confirm the appointment of the current parish and town council representatives on the Committee until further nominations were received, invited the town and parish councils to nominate three representatives as members of the Committee, asked Council to confirm the appointment of the current Independent Members as members of the Committee for the remainder of the 2018/19 municipal year and to confirm the retrospective reappointment of the Independent Persons for the remainder of the municipal year. Council accepted those recommendations.

2.7 The Committee received regular reports on complaints received about the conduct of Borough, town and parish councillors and on concerns raised via the Council's Whistleblowing Policy. Updates on developments in standards were also provided regularly.

2.8 A training session on standards was provided for town and parish councillors at the Lyric Theatre, Dinnington on 15 June 2017.

### **3. Key Issues**

3.1 The key issues within each item are set out above.

### **4. Consultation**

4.1 Not applicable

### **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1 Not applicable.

### **6. Financial and Procurement Implications**

6.1 None.

### **7. Legal Implications**

7.1 The Council has a duty under the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the Council and has delegated that responsibility to the Standards and Ethics Committee.

### **8. Human Resources Implications**

8.1 None.

### **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 None.

### **10. Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

10.1 None

**11. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

11.1 None

**12. Risks and Mitigation**

12.1 There is a risk of undermining public confidence in the Council and in local town and parish councils if high ethical standards and high standards of conduct are not maintained.

**13. Accountable Officer(s)**

Dermot Pearson, Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer