

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Standards and Ethics Committee – 12 March 2026

**Report Title**

Standards and Ethics Committee – Annual Report

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

No

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

N/A

**Report Author(s)**

Stuart Fletcher, Service Manager (Commercial and Property)

01709 823523

stuart.fletcher@rotherham.gov.uk

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

A report setting out the work undertaken by the Standards and Ethics Committee in 2025.

**Recommendations**

That the Committee notes the work undertaken by the Standards and Ethics Committee in 2025.

**List of Appendices Included**

N/A

**Background Papers**

None

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

None

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Standards and Ethics Committee – Annual Report**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 This report summarises the work undertaken by the Standards Committee during 2025.

### **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 In January 2025 the Committee received a report about a consultation which had recently opened in relation to the Government possibly strengthening the standards regime. The Committee answered the questions within the Consultation document and provided their views in relation to the issues raised within the consultation. The Monitoring Officer subsequently submitted those views as part of the Government consultation
- 2.2 Also in January 2025 the Committee considered a report relating to dispensations to those members who are tenants of the Council in order that they may vote on Council business concerning housing matters.
- 2.3 The Committee also considered ongoing and resolved complaints pursuant to the Standards and Ethics Committee Complaints Procedure, and concerns raised pursuant to the Whistleblowing Policy. These items were considered at each of the Standards and Ethics Committee meetings set out below, as standard agenda items. Further, information as to all of the complaints received through the year, and the concerns brought pursuant to the Whistleblowing Policy are set out within the respective reports, brought to this meeting.
- 2.4 In March 2025 the Committee received a report relating to the membership of the Committee and resolved for a ballot to be undertaken by the Yorkshire Local Council Association in relation to Parish Council members of the Committee, as well as advertising for Independent Members for the Committee.
- 2.5 Also in March 2025 the Committee received a report setting out a Work Plan for the Committee for the forthcoming year.
- 2.6 Also in March 2025, the Committee was provided with training in relation to Sub-Committee Hearings and their related principles and procedures.
- 2.7 In June 2025 an update as to the ballot for Parish Council members other Committee and the recruitment process for Independent Members was provided.
- 2.8 Further a review of the Council's Code of Conduct was undertaken. The Council adopted the LGA Model Code of Conduct in May 2021, and the Committee resolved that the Code of Conduct was still appropriate and fit for purpose.
- 2.8 Also in June 2025 an update was provided to the Committee about the Civility and Respect Pledge and its adoption by Parish Councils within the Borough.

Feedback was provided to the Committee from the Parish Network Group as to their thoughts about the Pledge and ways in which it had been helpful to Parish Councils, and reasons as to why some Parish Councils had not adopted it.

- 2.10 Also in June 2025 the Committee received a report relating to the LGA's Civility in Public Life campaign and the resources available within that around standards and conduct, social media guidance and conflict resolution and handling abuse. The availability of those resources was subsequently reiterated to Parish Councils by means of a letter from the Chair of the Committee.
- 2.11 In September 2025 the Committee received a report regarding the appointment of Parish Council members to the Committee following the outcome of the ballot by YLCA.
- 2.12 The Committee was also provided with information as to Members Registers of Interests following an exercise in relation to the publication of both Borough Council at Parish Council members Registers of Interests. Following this a reminder was sent to all Parish Councils as to the importance of ensuring that member's Registers of Interests were kept up-to-date and published.
- 2.13 Also in September 2025 the Committee received a report relating to the LGA Debate not Hate campaign and resolved to establish a Working Group to consider the LGA toolkit and self-assessment in relation to this campaign.
- 2.14 In November 2025 the first meeting of the Debate not Hate Working Group took place at which the requirements of the self-assessment were considered and arrangements were made as to how this would be best achieved, along with a timeline for completing the assessment and reporting back to the Committee.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

3.1 N/A

### **4. Consultation on proposal**

4.1 N/A

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

N/A

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

6.1 The officer time in dealing with the matters set out above is met within existing Legal Services resources.

### **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

7.1 The Council and the Standards and Ethics Committee have a statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct, pursuant to the Localism Act 2011. The matters referred to above set out how the Committee fulfils that duty.

**8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

None

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

None

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

None

**11. Implications for Partners**

None

**12. Risks and Mitigation**

None

**13. Accountable Officer(s)**

Bal Nahal, Head of Legal Services

*Report Author:* Stuart Fletcher, Service Manager (Commercial and Property)  
01709 823523 - [stuart.fletcher@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.fletcher@rotherham.gov.uk)

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