

**FULL COUNCIL
21 MAY 2019**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

TITLE OF REPORT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE
REPORT OF MONITORING OFFICER
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE (2018/19)
COUNCIL PRIORITY: RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the Annual report of the Standards Committee in relation to its ethical standards in the preceding civic year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Council receives and notes the Annual Report of the Standards Committee attached at Appendix A.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In line with recommended good governance practice to report the work of Standards Committee to the full Membership, to promote and maintain high standards of conduct and to demonstrate a strong commitment to ethical values.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 To return to the oral reports provided to Annual Council. However, this was not considered an appropriate option given a written report would demonstrate and communicate the work of the Committee/ standards issues more effectively.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 None – other than the Standards Committee as part of their deliberations on the matters detailed within the Annual Report.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 The current standards regime was introduced in July 2012 following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011 ('the Act'). There is a legal duty under section 27 of the Act to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. The Standards Committee has the responsibility under the Council's Constitution to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. Since 2017 a written Annual Report has been presented to the membership, with an address by the Chairman of the Standards Committee for the relevant civic year. This is in line with best practice recommendations. The Annual report is at Appendix A.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The report at Appendix A sets out the work of the Standards Committee and Monitoring Officer during the civic year 2018/19.
- 8.2 Looking ahead to 2019/20, as indicated in the Annual Report, some of the work will be subject to the Government's response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life report from January 2019. The Code of Conduct shall be reviewed later on this year, pending this. If changes are deemed appropriate at that stage, then these will be considered by the Committee and any recommendations made to Full Council for its approval. The Government's response shall be reported through to the Standards Committee, in any event, for consideration.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Although it is not specifically referred to in the Constitution, Full Council has routinely received an Annual Report on standards issues. There is no legal requirement to have an Annual Report; however, it is considered good practice to do so.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no capital or revenue implications arising from the content of this report.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Appropriate policy frameworks help to ensure good governance of the Council and therefore reduce risk of poor practice or unsafe decision making.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 The Councillor code of conduct clearly states that requirement of all councillors to carry out their duties with the principles stated in the Equality Act. The Standards committee ensures this ethical standards are adhered to. There are no other implications to this report.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 None. The work outlined within the report is within the Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officers' caseload.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A – Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2018/19.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 16.1 Jeanette Thompson Service Director: Legal and Community and Monitoring Officer
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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 Other than those identified within the Annual Report, none.