



REPORT OF:	The Monitoring Officer
TO:	Standards Committee
ON:	29 June 2022

SUBJECT: Standards Committee Work Programme 2023/23

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To establish the work programme of the Standards Committee for 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to agree its work programme for 2022/23.

3. BACKGROUND

The Standard's Committee's role and function is contained in the constitution, which includes monitoring the operation of the Council's standards arrangements and to make such recommendations to the Council as the Committee considers appropriate with respect to:

- the promotion and maintenance of high standards in the conduct of council and Parish/Town Councils business, and in the conduct of Members;
- the maintenance and review of a Code of Conduct for Members of the Council, together with such other code, procedure, protocol or guidance as the Committee considers to be appropriate and to make recommendations to the Council on such codes and regulations;
- the provision of training, guidance and assistance for Members in relation to the Council's Code of Conduct for Members and any other such code, procedure or protocol.

Although there has been some disruption in the schedule of meetings due to the Covid restrictions, the Standards Committee has considered personal safety for members, which remains a continuing concern with the number of incidents of abuse via social media or direct physical confrontations being noted nationally as on the increase. The Committee approved the adoption of local Guidance supplementing that provided by the Local Government Association and may wish to review and re-fresh during the course of this year.

The Committee has also considered, and in particular whether to maintain the locally adopted Code, with some improvements or adopt the newly developed LGA model code. Full Council subsequently approved the continuation of the local updated Code of Conduct in March 2021. The Committee may wish to consider a further review during 2022/23 a further review of the Code and also a review of the Complaints Procedure ("Arrangements for dealing with complaints about the Code

of Conduct for Members”). During 2022/23, the Committee also considered the Virtual meetings Member Protocol, petitions advice for councillors and a review of the arrangements for the registration of member interests.

The Monitoring Officer has received a number of complaints against members during 2021/22 many of which related to the use of social media. The Committee may therefore wish to consider the issue and how further training and guidance could be provided to Members.

The Committee is invited to also consider any other areas/issues it would wish to include in the 2022/23 work programme.

4. RATIONALE

In addition to considering standing items such as the Monitoring Officer’s report on member complaints and national standards update, the Committee is encouraged to set a work programme for the year, which provide information in an open and transparent manner on the focus of its business. Setting work programmes is also considered best practice.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has a duty under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its members and to adopt a code of conduct that is consistent with the Nolan Principles. A planned work programme to deal with the specific roles and functions of the Committee, as set out in the constitution, will assist compliance with this duty.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

8. CONSULTATIONS

None.

Chief Officer/Member

Contact Officer: Asad Laher, Deputy Director – Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer.

Date: 20th June 2022

Background Papers: None