

Report to the Council

Committee: Standards Committee **Date:** 28 July 2015
Subject: Review of Terms of Reference
Chairman: Councillor G Chambers

Recommending:

(1) That the following be approved as the new Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee:

- (a) promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors and Co-Opted Members;**
- (b) assisting Councillors and Co-Opted Members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;**
- (c) advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;**
- (d) monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct;**
- (e) advising, training or arranging to train Councillors and Co-Opted Members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct**
- (f) considering dispensations to Councillors and Co-Opted Members (including Parish and Town Councillors) from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct**
- (g) dealing with any reports referred from or on behalf of the Monitoring Officer on any matter, including investigations relating to Councillor conduct;**
- (h) the exercise of (a) to (g) above in relation to the Parish Councils wholly or mainly in its area and the members of those Parish Councils either directly or through joint arrangements from time to time agreed; and**
- (i) adjudication on complaints regarding the operation of District Council protocols annexed to the Constitution; and**

(2) That the Council note the Terms of Reference above might be further revised as part of the ongoing review of the Constitution.

1. At its meeting held on 14 July 2015, the Standards Committee considered and approved changes to its Terms of Reference as a result of legislative changes

made in the Localism Act 2011

2. In summary the changes are for point (f), the amendment was to “*consider*” dispensations to Councillors from the requirements relating to interests in the Members’ Code of Conduct rather than “*granting*”.

3. For point (g), case tribunals and interim case tribunals had been abolished, and this was amended to refer to dealing with any reports “*referred from or on behalf of the Monitoring Officer*” on any matter, including “*investigations relating to Councillor conduct.*”

4. For point (h), the amendment was to exercise authority in relation to Parish Councils “*either directly or through joint arrangements from time to time agreed.*” This reflected the ability of Parish or Town Councils to make their own arrangements for Standards issues rather than automatically coming under the remit of the District Council.

5. These revisions affect the wording of Article 9 of the Constitution and therefore require the assent of Council. The Standards Committee noted that there is an ongoing review of the whole Constitution being undertaken by Officers and the Constitution Working Group at the current time, and further revisions to these Terms of Reference may be recommended by that review in March 2016.

6. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.