



Standards Committee

Wednesday, 7 February 2018 at 2.00 p.m.  
The Board Room - Municipal Building,  
Widnes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David W R'.

Chief Executive

**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Marjorie Bradshaw	Conservative
Councillor Harry Howard	Labour
Councillor Chris Loftus	Labour
Councillor Joan Lowe	Labour
Councillor Tony McDermott	Labour
Councillor Kevan Wainwright	Labour
Councillor Mike Wharton	Labour
Mr Tony Luxton	Co-Optee
Mrs Anita Morris	Co-Optee
Canon David Felix	Parish Council Co-optee

*Please contact Angela Scott on 0151 511 8670 or  
angela.scott@halton.gov.uk for further information.  
The next meeting of the Committee is to be confirmed*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH  
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Part I**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>1. MINUTES</b>	<b>1 - 2</b>
<b>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS</b>	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
<b>3. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT</b>	<b>3 - 5</b>
<b>4. STANDARDS COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>

***In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.***

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

*At a meeting of the Standards Committee Wednesday, 1 February 2017 in The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes*

Present: Councillors P. Lloyd Jones (Chair), M. Bradshaw, Cole, Howard, C. Loftus, J. Lowe, Wainwright, Wharton, Mr A. Luxton (Co-optee) and Mr S.Cluff (Parish Council Co-optee), Professor D. Norman (Independent Person), Mr R. Radley (Independent Person)

Apologies for Absence: Mrs D. Howard (Independent Person)  
Revd Canon D.Felix (Parish Council Co-optee), Councillor McDermott

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney and A. Scott

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH  
UNDER DUTIES  
EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE**

STC1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2016, having been circulated, were signed as a correct record.

STC2 STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer, which summarised the work of the Committee in the last Municipal Year.

At the meeting in February 2016, Members had considered the Annual Report, which had noted an update on the Standards regime. There had been an update on issues that had arisen in other parts of the country, which provided an insight into the nature of matters raised and how they were dealt with elsewhere.

In addition, Members also received a report on the Council's Whistleblowing Policy, in so far as it related to the work of the Standards Committee. It was noted that the Policy was kept under review as regards best practice, as

*Action*

part of the annual review of the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and referred to Council for information.

Operational  
Director, Legal  
and Democratic  
Services/  
Monitoring Officer

### STC3 STANDARDS COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer provided the Committee with an update on issues which had arisen in other parts of the country, which provided an insight into the kind of issues faced and the manner in which they had proceeded.

Details on recent cases were given from the following locations:-

- Coventry;
- Sandwell (Birmingham);
- Leek (Staffordshire);
- Bury;
- Sadleworth (Greater Manchester); and
- Croydon.

A verbal update was given on local matters that had been considered since the last meeting and on the work in relation to a Code of Conduct for the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority (CA), which was in preparation as part of the revision of the LCR CA Constitution.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

*Meeting ended at 2.54 p.m.*

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Standards Committee
<b>DATE:</b>	7 February 2018
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Leader
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Standards Committee Annual Report
<b>WARDS:</b>	Borough-Wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To summarise the work of the Committee in the last municipal year.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted and referred to Council for information.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Throughout the year Standards Committee was made up of nine elected members, Councillors P Lloyd Jones (Chair), M Bradshaw, Cole, Howard, C Loftus, J Lowe, McDermott, Wainwright and Wharton. In addition, there were two co-opted independent members, Mr Tony Luxton and Mrs Anita Morris. There were also two co-opted Parish Council Members, Mr S Cluff and Rev Canon D Felix. The Council's three independent members under the provisions of the Localism Act were Professor David Norman, Mrs Diane Howard and Mr Roy Radley. The Committee met on one occasion during the year.

3.2 The role of the Standards Committee is to:

- Help Councillor and Co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Promote and maintain a high standard of conduct by Councillors, Co-opted Members and Church and Parent Governor representatives.
- Advise the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Monitor the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Provide training to Councillors and Co-opted Members on matters relating to Members' conduct.
- Deal with complaints against Councillors and Parish Councillors.
- Deal with matters concerning politically restricted posts.

- Deal with dispensations relating to Declarations of Interest.

**3.3** At the meeting on 1 February 2017, Members considered the Annual Report which summarised the work of the Committee in the last municipal year.

In addition, Members also received a report which provided an update on issues which had arisen in other parts of the country, which gave an insight into the kinds of issues faced and the manner in which they had proceeded.

Details on recent cases were given from the following locations:

- Coventry
- Sandwell (Birmingham)
- Leek (Staffordshire)
- Bury
- Saddleworth (Greater Manchester)
- Croydon

A verbal update was given on local matters which had been considered since the last meeting.

The Monitoring Officer reported that no matters had been brought to his attention which required a formal investigation.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None.

6.2 Employment Learning and Skills in Halton

None

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 No risks have been identified which require controlled measures.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None.

**9.0 A LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1 There are no background papers within the meaning of the Act.

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Standards Committee
<b>DATE:</b>	7 February 2018
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Leader
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Standards Committee Update
<b>WARDS:</b>	Borough-Wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To inform Members of Standards issues which have arisen recently.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Members' attention is drawn to a number of press articles attached to this report concerning Standards issues in other parts of the UK.
- 3.2 The intention is to give Members a flavour of matters dealt with by other authorities, and how sanctions have been imposed. It is hoped that this will prompt discussion at the meeting.
- 3.3 The Monitoring Officer will give a verbal update at the meeting on local issues relating to Halton.

### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None.

### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 Children and Young People in Halton  
None.
- 6.2 Employment Learning and Skills in Halton  
None



6.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 No risks have been identified which require control measures.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The report itself does not contain any specific equality and diversity issues.

**9.0 A LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

Authority	Details	Link
Sandwell MBC	This case was the culmination of a long legal battle over several years. The failed attempt to judicially review Sandwell by the subject member for abuse of process is also worth reading as it covers issues such as whether things done prior to the Localism Act could be investigated under the Act, whether a 'pre-investigation' amounted to prejudice and whether an investigator was entitled to make a finding or simply present the evidence and leave the conclusion to the committee	<a href="http://bit.ly/2DtjaXr">http://bit.ly/2DtjaXr</a>
Honiton Town Council and East Devon District Council	A successful JR of an unlawful sanction imposed by a town council. However, the district council was found to have acted lawfully when it dealt with the case under the Localism Act	<a href="http://bit.ly/2n4MsFb">http://bit.ly/2n4MsFb</a>
Derby City Council	This was the culmination of a long-running saga where a councillor had been sanctioned but the sanction was not acted upon quickly. The council is now reviewing the way it handles cases.	<a href="http://bit.ly/2zTloAd">http://bit.ly/2zTloAd</a>
Conwy County Borough Council (Wales)	Included this case as it is interesting to see how it works where there is still a power of suspension and disqualification. In England this would have resulted in a censure and a possible request to attend training.	<a href="http://bit.ly/2n5ToCy">http://bit.ly/2n5ToCy</a>

Bath & NE Somerset Council	A recent case in which a member was found not to have registered or declared an interest in property during consideration of a planning application.	<a href="http://bit.ly/2F7HJtD">http://bit.ly/2F7HJtD</a>
East Riding of Yorkshire Council	Not been dealt with as a standards case (yet) but interesting story of a councillor being convicted for planning breaches – not covered by consultation on extending 'disqualification' criteria – would council deal with this as a standards issue or is this a private matter?	<a href="http://bit.ly/2n10ilu">http://bit.ly/2n10ilu</a>
Cumbria County Council	Not a standards issue but to do with filming of a meeting – raises issues about how a council might handle the situation.	<a href="http://bit.ly/2DAYBfc">http://bit.ly/2DAYBfc</a>
East Riding of Yorkshire Council	A council wanting to have tougher sanctions following a bullying case.	<a href="http://bit.ly/2DyKSGv">http://bit.ly/2DyKSGv</a>
Bolton MBC	A case involving false claims made on Facebook about a council by a councillor.	<a href="http://bit.ly/2n4QbCA">http://bit.ly/2n4QbCA</a>
St Helens Council	Another social media case where the councillor claimed he was acting in a private capacity.	<a href="http://bit.ly/2n5czeU">http://bit.ly/2n5czeU</a>