

REPORT TO: Standards Committee

DATE: 11 February 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer

PORTFOLIO: Leader

SUBJECT: Standards Committee Annual Report

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To summarise the work of the Committee in the last municipal year and to recommend Members to invite Council to note the Report

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

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The major change made to the standards regime by the Localism Act 2011 became embedded in the Council's processes during the municipal year. Throughout the year, the Standards Committee was made up of nine elected Members, Councillors Peter Lloyd Jones (Chairman) Marjorie Bradshaw, Arthur Cole, , Joan Lowe, Tony McDermott, Tom McInerney, Stan Parker, Kevan Wainwright, and Bill Woolfall. In addition, there were two co-opted Independent Members, Mr Tony Luxton and Mrs Anita Morris. The positions for two co-opted Parish Council Members remained vacant throughout the year. The Council appointed three independent persons under the provisions of the Localism Act, Professor David Norman, Mrs Diane Howard, and Mr Roy Radley. All were invited to each meeting. The Committee met on two occasions 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 high standards 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 the Members Code of 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 The September meeting received the Annual Report of the Committee, an update on cases across the country, and also a report on Declaration of Interests by Members.

3.4 In April, the Leader and Chief Executive attended to discuss standards issues from their perspective, and to demonstrate their commitment to the work of the Committee and the upholding of the highest possible standards of conduct in Halton. The meeting also received a verbal report on the outcome of a complaint, and the usual digest of cases elsewhere.

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 None

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

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