

REPORT TO: Audit and Governance Board

DATE: 19 March 2025

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

PORTFOLIO: Leader

SUBJECT: Standards Update

WARD(S) Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

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

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Audit and Governance Board assumed responsibility for the work of the former Standards Committee in 2021.

3.2 In discussions with the Chair, it was agreed that reports on Standards issues would be brought as and when necessary, but that it would be helpful to bring an update to the last meeting of each municipal year in any event, with the intention of giving Members information on any national and local developments of interest, and providing the Monitoring Officer with the opportunity of informing Members verbally of any complaints received in Halton.

3.3 There are no proposed changes to the Code of Conduct for Members for the Board to consider this year.

3.4 At the Standards Committee each year, a report would be brought to draw to Members' attention any relevant press articles concerning Standards issues in other parts of the UK.

3.5 The intention was to give Members a flavour of matters dealt with by other authorities, and how sanctions have been imposed. Reports have been difficult to come by in recent times, but any relevant information will be provided at the meeting.

- 3.6** It is proposed that the Monitoring Officer will provide a verbal update on Halton cases in the usual way.
- 3.7** Should Members consider it helpful, they could resolve that this report be forwarded to Council for information, along with the minutes in place of the previous Standards Committee annual report.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** It is vital that the highest standards of conduct are maintained.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

None.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

None.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

None.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

None.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

None.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

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 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None arising from this report.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.