



Standards Committee

Wednesday, 1 February 2017 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 Arthur Cole	Labour
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
Mr Stephen Cluff	Parish Council 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

Item No.	Page No.
1. MINUTES	1 - 3
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS	
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.	
3. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT	4 - 6
4. STANDARDS COMMITTEE UPDATE	7 - 9

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, 10 February 2016 The Board Room - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors P. Lloyd Jones (Chair), M. Bradshaw, Cole, J. Lowe, McDermott, Parker, Tony Luxton (Co-optee), Canon David Felix (Parish Council Co-optee), Professor David Norman (Independent Person) and Mr Roy Radley (Independent Person)

Apologies for Absence: Anita Morris (Co-optee) and Stephen Cluff (Parish Council Co-optee)

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor Kevan Wainwright

Officers present: M. Reaney, A. Scott and L. Driscoll

Also in attendance: One member of the public

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

	<i>Action</i>
STC1 MINUTES	
The minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2015 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 2015, Members had considered the Annual Report, which had noted the major changes to the Standards regime and the implementation of the Localism Act. There had been an update on issues that had arisen in other parts of the country, which had provided an insight into the nature of matters raised and how they were dealt with elsewhere.	
In addition, Members also received an update on matters within Halton, although no further investigations had been required into any of the three complaints that had been	

received.

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

Operational
Director, Legal and
Democratic
Services
/Monitoring Officer

STC3 WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The Committee considered a report of the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer, on the Council's Whistleblowing Policy, in so far as it related to the work of the Standards Committee.

Lisa Driscoll, Policy Officer, addressed the Committee to advise on the current version of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy (the Policy). It was noted that, as part of the annual review of the Council's Constitution, the Policy was kept under review as regards best practice, the outcome of legal cases and model practice demonstrated by other local authorities or public bodies.

Ms Driscoll dealt with Members' questions before being thanked for her attendance.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

STC4 STANDARDS 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:-

- Wiltshire;
- Surrey;
- Wells (Somerset);
- Wigan;
- Shropshire; and
- St Helens.

A verbal update was given on local issues and on the anticipated revision of the Members' Code of Conduct. The Monitoring Officer advised that, since his secondment at Cheshire West and Chester Council had ended in June

2015, he had been working with the Liverpool City Region on a review of a Merseyside-wide Members' Code of Conduct and would keep Members of the Committee informed of progress in this regard.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Meeting ended at 2.48 p.m.

DRAFT

REPORT TO:	Standards Committee
DATE:	1 February 2017
REPORTING OFFICER:	Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer
PORTFOLIO:	Leader
SUBJECT:	Standards Committee Annual Report
WARDS:	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, Cassidy, Cole, J Lowe, McDermott, T McNerney, Parker and Wainwright. 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 all reappointed at Annual Council in May 2016. These were Professor David Norman, Mrs Diane Howard and Mr Roy Radley. All were invited to each meeting. 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 in February 2016, Members considered the Annual Report, setting out an update on the Standards regime.

The Committee considered a report of the Operational Director Legal and Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer on the Council's Whistleblowing Policy, in so far as it related to the work of the Standards Committee. Lisa Driscoll, Policy Officer, addressed the Committee on the current version of the Policy and it was noted that as part of the annual review of the Council's Constitution, the Policy was kept under review as regards best practice, the outcome of legal cases and model practice demonstrated by other local authorities or public bodies.

The Committee also received a report dealing with issues which had arisen in other parts of the country, which provided an insight into the kind of matters faced and the manner in which they had been dealt with. A verbal report was given on local issues, which indicated that no matters had been brought to the attention of the Monitoring Officer 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.

REPORT TO: Standards Committee

DATE: 1 February 2017

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

PORTFOLIO: Leader

SUBJECT: Standards Committee Update

WARDS: Borough-Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

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

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 give Members a flavour of matters dealt with by other authorities, how the local authorities have been interpreted and the way 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, and on the anticipated revision of the Members' Code of Conduct.

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 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.

Coventry Telegraph 5/9/16

<http://www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-tory-councillor-racially-abusive-11842308>

BBC News 20/5/16 – Sandwell case – Cllr Hussain

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-36340283>

Leek Post & Times 20/4/16

<http://www.leek-news.co.uk/panel-decide-councillor-s-fate/story-29137916-detail/story.html>

Bury Times 16/5/16

http://www.burytimes.co.uk/news/14495846.Whitefield_councillor_refused_to_say_sorry_for_sending_controversial_email/

The Guardian 22/2/16

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/feb/22/sex-offender-refuses-to-resign-from-council>

Croydon Advertiser 1/4/16

<http://www.croydonadvertiser.co.uk/croydon-advertiser-calls-matthew-kyeremeh-resign/story-29032452-detail/story.html>