

Standards Committee

21 May 2009

Amendments to Standards Committee Procedures



Report of Lesley Davies, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report is intended to obtain Committee approval to certain minor amendments which are required to the Council's existing procedures for handling Code of Conduct complaints.

Background

- 2 These amendments are necessary for a variety of reasons. Firstly, the creation of the Unitary Authority introduces responsibility for handling complaints concerning Parish and Town Councils. Amendments to the existing procedures are therefore necessary to reflect the statutory requirement that at least one Parish representative should always be involved in decision making relating to Parish Councillors.

Secondly, the existing procedures need updating to reflect amendments made by the Standards Committee Regulations 2008 to the system of handling complaints. In future, virtually all complaints will be received direct by the County Council rather than referred by the Standards Board as was originally the practice. The Regulations have also increased the range of sanctions available to a Council's Standards Committee in the event of breach of the Code of Conduct and the local determination procedures need to be updated to reflect those increased powers.

Finally, there are a number of minor amendments in terminology to reflect the titles now applicable to officers engaged in this process.

Current Position

- 3 Amended procedures have been drafted and are appended to this report as Appendices 2, 3 and 4. The changes are highlighted to assist members in focusing on those aspects which are being recommended for amendment.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 4 The Committee is recommended to approve the amendments to the Council's procedures for assessment investigation and determination of complaints annexed to this report.

Background Papers

The Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2009.
Updated guidance on the assessment investigation and determination of complaints available on the Standards Board website.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Local Government Reorganisation

These amendments are partly due to LGR.

Finance

None

Staffing

None

Equality and Diversity

None

Accommodation

None

Crime and disorder

None

Sustainability

None

Human rights

None

Localities and Rurality

None

Young people

None

Consultation

None

Health