



North Tyneside Council

Standards Committee

Friday, 4 June 2021

Thursday, 10 June 2021 0.01 The Chamber - Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY **commencing at 6.00 pm.** (Due to Covid precautions anyone wishing to attend should first notify the contact officer.)

| Agenda Item | Page |
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| 1. Apologies for Absence | |
| To receive apologies for absence. | |
| 2. Appointment of Substitute Members | |
| To be notified of the appointment of any Substitute Members. | |
| 3. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations | |
| You are invited to declare any registerable and/or non-registerable interests in matters appearing on the agenda, and the nature of that interest. | |
| You are also invited to disclose any dispensations in relation to any registerable and/or non-registerable interests that have been granted to you in respect of any matters appearing on the agenda. | |
| Please complete the Declarations of Interests card available at the meeting and return it to the Democratic Services Officer before leaving the meeting. | |
| 4. Minutes | 5 - 6 |
| To confirm the minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 8 April 2021. | |

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting and receive information about it. However, in order to enable the meetings to be held in a Covid-secure manner, places for members of the public are limited. Please email democraticservices@northtyneside.gov.uk or call 0191 643 5315 if you wish to attend or require further information.

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| Agenda Item | Page |
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| 5. Standards Committee Action Plan/Work Programme 2021-22 | 7 - 10 |
| To consider the Action Plan/Work Programme 2021-22 of the Standards Committee for the year up to 31 March 2022. | |
| 6. Ethical Governance and Standards | |
| Cllr F Lott, to provide his views to the committee on Ethical Governance and Standards issues relating to his time as Chair of Planning Committee. | |
| 7. Ethical Governance and Standards - Approach to the Region | |
| To consider scope to work with other authorities across the region on a regional approach to ethical governance and standards. | |

Circulation overleaf ...

Members of the Standards Committee

Councillor Frank Lott (Chair)
Councillor Lewis Bartoli
Councillor Debbie Cox
Councillor Janet Hunter
Councillor Matthew Thirlaway

Councillor Wendy Lott (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Brian Burdis
Councillor Eddie Darke
Councillor Pat Oliver

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Standards Committee

8 April 2021

Present: Councillor M Rankin (Chair)
Councillors S Brockbank, B Burdis, S Graham, Janet Hunter, C
Johnson, K Lee, F Lott, B Pickard
Dr S Green and Mr G Clark, Independent Persons

SC06/04/21 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

SC07/04/21 Appointment of Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

SC08/04/21 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

SC09/04/21 Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous Standards Committee meeting held on 12 November 2020 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

SC10/04/21 LGA Model Code of Conduct

The Committee considered the report which informed the Committee of the LGAs recently published Model Code of Conduct and set out the differences between the model code and the Authority's current Code of Conduct.

It was noted that there were many similarities between the model code and the Authority's current Code of Conduct but there are also some differences.

The report recommended that the Committee establish a Working Group to consider the LGAs model against the Authority's current Code of Conduct in order to make recommendations as to whether any amendments should be made to the Code of Conduct. It was noted that any proposed changes to the Authority's Code of Conduct would be referred the constitution task group for consideration before being reported to Full Council for approval.

The Committee was in favour of setting up a task group to consider the Code of Conduct against the model Code.

There was some discussion about two issues raised by members and whether they should be covered by this task group. These related to matters of integrity and honesty in the way Councillors present information in political campaigns, and transparency and openness on imprints on campaign leaflets. It was noted that the current code of conduct covers issues of honesty and integrity in relation to the Nolan Principles, but the interpretation of the Nolan Principles could be covered by the working group. It was noted that issues around imprints on

election leaflets were outside of the Code of Conduct which only applies to councillors, but that election issues can be referred to the Returning Officer or the police as appropriate.

An issue was also highlighted in relation to a point in the Code in relation to reporting suspicions around safeguarding, and whether this requirement should also extend to other matters of dishonesty. It was suggested that the working group could look at whether this requirement should be wider and should include reporting concerns around other criminal matters.

Cllrs Lott and Graham indicated an interest in joining the working group.

Resolved: That a working group of up to 4 members of the Committee be established in accordance with the political balance of the Authority, to review the Authority's current Code of Conduct against the LGAs model code and report back to this Committee with recommendations on whether any amendments should be made.

SC11/04/21 Standards Committee Draft Annual Report 2020-21

The Committee considered the Standards Committee draft Annual Report for 2020-21.

- Resolved:**
1. That the draft Annual Report 2020-21 be noted;
 2. That the Head of Law and Governance be authorised to finalise the report in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee and for the report to be submitted to the Annual Council meeting on 20 May 2021.

Signed by: -----

Date: -----

Cllr M Rankin, Chair of the Standards Committee

North Tyneside Council Report to Standards Committee Date: 10 June 2021

ITEM

Title: Action Plan/Work
Programme 2021/22

Report from Service Area: Law and Governance

Report Author: Bryn Roberts, Head of Law and Governance (Tel: 643 5339)
and Monitoring Officer

Wards affected: All

1.1 Purpose:

To provide a report on the Action Plan/Work Programme of the Standards Committee for 2021/22.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

The schedule of meetings for 2021/22 be noted and the work programme for the Standards Committee set out below be adopted.

1.3 Information

1.3.1 The Standards Committee's - Action Plan/Work Programme up to 31 March 2022

The Standards Committee is responsible for the Authority's statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the Elected Mayor, Councillors, Co-opted Members.

1.3.2 The terms of reference of the Standards Committee are set out in Part 3.5 of the Authority's Constitution and are: -

1. To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the Elected Mayor, Councillors, Co-opted Members and church and parent governor representatives.
2. To ensure the Elected Mayor, Councillors and Co-opted Members and church and parent governor representatives observe the Members' Code of Conduct.
3. To advise the Authority on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct.
4. To monitor the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct.
5. To advise, train or arrange to train the Elected Mayor, Councillors and Co-opted Members and church and parent governor representatives on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
6. To grant dispensations to the Elected Mayor, Councillors and Co-opted Members and church and parent governor representatives from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct.

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| and the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Planning Committee and other Regulatory Committees. | | |
| To invite Chairs of Standards Committees from other Authorities in the region to attend Committee meetings. | To provide an opportunity to understand ethical governance and standards issues in other Authorities. | Ongoing |
| To provide training for the Committee on relevant ethical standards issues. | Training on local assessment, the Code of Conduct and other relevant matters/legislation. | Ongoing. |
| To review training available to all Council Members on ethical governance, ethical standards issues including arrangements with respect to the Code of Conduct; granting of dispensations, the use of Social Media and declaring interests. | To ensure all members receive information on ethical governance, ethical standards to minimise risk of unwitting breaches of the Code of Conduct. | By May 2022 |
| Continue production of Annual Standards Committee Report | Presentation of Annual Report of the work of the Committee during the previous 12 months. | By end of each municipal year. |

1.3.2 The schedule of Meetings 2021/22

- 10 June 2021
- 11 November 2021
- 7 April 2022

1.4 Appendices:

None.

1.5 Contact officers:

Bryn Roberts, Head of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer (0191) 643 5339

Louise Watson, Senior Manager - Legal Services (0191) 643 5325

1.6 Background information:

- Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members.
- The Localism Act 2011.
- Standards Committee Annual Report 2020/21.