

Wiltshire Council

Standards Committee

18 April 2024

Annual Update to Council

Purpose of Report

1. To request that the Standards Committee delegate authority to the Director, Legal and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman, to prepare an annual update of the activity of the Standards Committee and the Standards Sub-Committees, for consideration by Full Council on 21 May 2024.

Background

2. The Standards Committee's responsibilities as set out at Paragraph 2.5.7 of Part 3B of the Constitution include, but is not limited to:
 - promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by elected and co-opted Members and officers;
 - monitoring and advising the Council about the operation of its code of conduct in the light of best practice and any changes in the law;
 - granting dispensations to elected and co-opted Members from requirements relating to interests;
 - overseeing the operation of the Council's arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints against Members and Co-opted Members of Wiltshire Council, and Members of City, Town, and Parish councils;
 - overview of corporate complaints handling and Ombudsman investigations;
 - oversight of the Council's constitution and making recommendations to Council.
3. The Committee has established the Constitution Focus Group to review sections of the Constitution and present it with proposals to consider, and has or may convene the Assessment Sub-Committee, Hearing Sub-Committee, and Dispensation Sub-Committee, in order to carry out its role.

Main Considerations

4. In accordance with the Constitution Full Council has established many committees to be responsible for the discharge or oversight of many of the council's non-executive functions
5. Examples of these committees include planning and licensing committees, Audit & Governance, and the Standards Committee.
6. In order to highlight the functions of and work of various committees which otherwise may work in relative isolation from other aspects of the council, it is proposed that an annual update be prepared of the operations of various committees, including Standards Committee, for consideration by Full Council at its annual meeting on 21 May 2024.

7. It is proposed this would be a short update taken on an annual basis similar to the annual report on Overview and Scrutiny. This would briefly set out the role and purpose of the committee, its level of activity, issues which had been discussed or investigated, as well as significant developments relevant to the remit of the committee, for example changes to legislation.
8. As there remains five weeks of the municipal year at the time of the writing of this report, it is proposed that the Director, Legal and Governance, be given delegated authority to prepare the annual update, after consultation from the Chairman.

Safeguarding Implications

9. There are no safeguarding implications arising from this report.

Public Health Implications

10. There are no public health implications arising from this report.

Procurement Implications

11. There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

12. There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

13. There are no environmental or climate change implications arising from this report.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is not taken

14. No risks have been identified arising from this report.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken

15. No risks have been identified arising from this report.

Finance Implications

16. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

17. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Workforce Implications

18. There are no workforce implications arising from this report.

Conclusions

19. Providing annual updates to Full Council on committee activity will highlight the role of council committees and sub-committees and draw attention to any significant developments or issues within the remit of the committee.

Proposal

20. To delegate authority to the Director, Legal and Governance, after consultation with the Chairman, to prepare an annual update to Full Council.

Perry Holmes - Director, Legal and Governance

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Appendices

None

Background Papers

None