

Report to: **Standards Committee**

Date: **21 April 2015**

Title of report: **Annual Report of the Standards Committee**

By: **Assistant Chief Executive**

Purpose of report: **To provide an update on Member Conduct issues, the work of the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Standards Committee is recommended to

- 1) note the report; and**
 - 2) agree the report for submission to the County Council for consideration.**
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1. Background information

1.1 Between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015 three complaints were received against Members of the County Council. The complaints were considered by the Assessment Sub Committee. The Assessment Sub Committee decided to refer one case to the Monitoring Officer for investigation, one case was referred to the Monitoring Officer for action other than an investigation and in relation to the third alleged breach of the Code the Sub Committee decided that no further action was required.

1.2 It is considered that the standards of conduct among Members and co-opted members of the Council remain high and maintaining good standards is taken seriously. There were 3 complaints considered by the Assessment Sub Committee in 2014/15, one case in 2013/14, one in 2012/13 one in 2011/12, two in 2010/11 and 4 in 2009/10.

2. Applications for Dispensation

2.1 In limited circumstances, Members can apply in writing for dispensations to take part in business that they would otherwise have been unable to participate in through having prejudicial interests. During 2014/15 there were no applications for dispensations.

2.2 All dispensations are entered on the register of Members' interests and remain there for the appropriate period.

3. Register of Members' Interests

3.1 The Monitoring Officer is required to establish and maintain a register of interests of Members of the Council. All Members have completed and returned their registers and are reminded every six months of the need to notify the Monitoring Officer of any changes. The registers are available for public inspection and are available on the Council's website.

3.2 A register of Gifts and Hospitality is also maintained by the Monitoring Officer. Members have to register gifts and hospitality received with an estimated value of £50 or more. Councillors are reminded every 6 months of the need to declare gifts and hospitality of such a value.

3.3 There is an ongoing requirement to keep the information of the register of interest form up to date. Councillors must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new registerable personal interest or change to any registered interest, give written notification to the Monitoring Officer.

4. Training

4.1 Guidance regarding the standards regime has previously been circulated to all newly elected councillors. The Code of Conduct including register of interests, personal interests, disclosable pecuniary interests and gifts and hospitality, were covered during presentation at the Induction Day on 9 May 2013.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The Committee is recommended to note the report and to recommend to County Council the Annual Report of the Standards Committee for consideration.

PHILIP BAKER

Assistant Chief Executive

Contact Officer – Andy Cottell, Democratic Services Manager (01273 481955)

Local Members: All

Background Documents: None

Appendix 1

Complaints received by the Standards Committee 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015

Reference	Date Received	Type and Date of Committee	Complainant	Summary of Complaint	Outcome	Resolved
SC.002.14	14 May 2014	Assessment Sub Committee 11 June 2014	Member of the public	Breach of General Principles of Code of Conduct (Paragraphs 1, 2(a), 2(b), 4(a), 4(b), 5, 6(a) and 7)	No further action should be taken	Yes
SC.003.14	11 June 2014	Assessment Sub Committee 4 July 2014	Clerk of Parish Council	Breach of General Principles of Code of Conduct (Paragraph 5)	Referred to Monitoring Officer for further action.	Yes
SC.001.15	7 December 2014	Assessment Sub Committee 21 January 2015	Member of the public	Breach of General Principles of Code of Conduct (Paragraph 1)	Referred to Monitoring Officer for investigation	No

