

**Committee: STANDARDS**

**Agenda Item**

**Date: 18 July 2011**

**5**

**Title: COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

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### Summary

1. At its meeting on 22 March 2010 members adopted a work programme for the following council year. This programme will have been achieved by the conclusion of this meeting.

### Recommendations

2. That members adopt a work programme for the forthcoming council year.

### Background Papers

3. None

### Impact

- 4.

Communication/Consultation	NONE.
Community Safety	NONE.
Equalities	NONE.
Finance	Any work undertaken by the committee must be within existing financial restraints. There is no budget for the Standards Committee as such.
Health and Safety	NONE.
Human Rights	NONE.
Legal implications	NONE.
Sustainability	NONE.
Ward-specific impacts	NONE.
Workforce/Workplace	NONE.

## Situation

5. In order to maintain its profile it is important that the Standards Committee has an annual work programme to follow. Last year's programme has now been concluded and members therefore need to determine what areas of work they wish to focus on in the coming 12 months.
6. As a matter of good practice the committee should prepare an annual report for Full Council. This should clearly be done early in the council year.
7. As members will be aware the current Standards Regime is to be abolished by the Localism Bill probably during 2012. The Bill contains a duty on the part of local authorities however to promote and maintain high standards of conduct among members. It also gives local authorities an express power to adopt voluntary codes of conduct and local authorities may appoint standards committees under the Local Government Act 1972. The Constitution Working Group has indicated that it intends to recommend to the Council that it should adopt a Code of Conduct and that it should retain a Standards Committee with independent members. The bulk of the work programme for the current year will therefore centre around advising the Council on a Code of Conduct to be adopted once the Localism Bill becomes law and devising appropriate procedures for the vetting and investigation of complaints.
8. A draft work programme is attached for consideration. There may be other areas of work which members would wish to be examined during the course of the next council year.

## Risk Analysis

9.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The committee lacks focus and has insufficient work.	2, even without a work programme the committee would have a function in assessing complaints and considering reports into allegations passed for investigation.	4, the council would suffer reputational damage if its Standards Committee was not proactive.	Members adopt a robust work programme.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12**

Meeting	Topics to be covered
18 July	Annual Report to Full Council Annual work programme Voluntary Code of Conduct Preliminary consideration to investigation mechanism First Tier Tribunal update
14 November	Finalisation of Code of Conduct Conclude investigation mechanism First Tier Tribunal update
12 March	Agree policies for vetting complaints and dealing with investigation for publication First Tier Tribunal update