

Title of meeting:	Governance and Audit and Standards Committee
Date of meeting:	1 July 2016
Subject:	Proposed amendments to the Arrangements for the Assessment, Consideration and Investigation of Complaints against Councillors
Report by:	City Solicitor
Wards affected:	N/A
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	Yes

1. Purpose of report

To allow members to consider proposed arrangements for the consideration and investigation of complaints against members.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider and recommend to Council the following amendments to the process:

- 2.1. Agree that all members of Council may be asked to sit on Sub-Committees of Governance Audit and Standards Committee and the Initial Filtering Panel when they are considering complaints that members have breached the Code of Conduct.
- 2.2. Approve the amended Arrangements for Assessment, Investigation and Determination of Complaints attached at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.3. Approve the amended Complaint Form attached at Appendix 2 to this report.

3. Background

The 'new' Arrangements for Assessment, Investigation and Determination of Complaints which were brought in following the Localism Act of 2011 have now been in place for four years and as a result of the practical application of the Council's adopted procedures, it is now thought it would be helpful to make some practical amendments to those procedures. The proposed amendments, it is hoped, will make the procedure more transparent to members of the public and also help with the more efficient management of the process.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1. Under the present arrangements, only members of Governance Audit and Standards and their deputies may form the Sub-Committees or Initial Filtering Panel required by the process. This limits the pool of potential members to 13. This can provide difficulties in arranging meetings without undue delay. There are also occasions when members have to exclude themselves from the Sub-Committees due to conflict of interest. It is therefore proposed that the potential panel is widened to include all members of Council. A similar process is at present used by the Employment Committee for senior management appeals.
- 4.2. Members will note at Appendix 2 alterations are proposed to the Complaint Form and also the Arrangements for Assessment, Investigation and Determination of Complaints at Appendix 1. None of the proposed changes to either of these documents is substantive but it is hoped will give greater clarity to the procedure which is followed. The proposed alterations arise from a number of discussions and correspondence which we have had with residents who have upon occasions found the process somewhat lacking in clarity.

5. Equality impact assessment

This report does not require an Equality Impact Assessment as it does not propose any new or changed services, policies or strategies.

6. Legal implications

The legal implications are embodied within this report.

7. Director of Finance's comments

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations contained within this report.

.....
Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Arrangements for Assessment, Investigation and Determination of Complaints (tracked copy)

Appendix 2 - Complaint Form (tracked copy)

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

.....
Signed by: