

New Article – The Standards Committee

Role and Function

The Council will establish a Standards Committee which will:

- i) Promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members of South Kesteven District Council and all Town and Parish Councils in the district.
- ii) Develop a culture of openness, transparency, trust and confidence between Members and in Member and Officer relationships and embed a strong culture of strong ethical and corporate governance at all levels in the Council.
- iii) Advise the Council on the adoption or revision of the Councillor Code of Conduct.
- iv) Advise and recommend to the Monitoring Officer any training that may be necessary on matters relating to and assisting Members, Co-opted Members and Town and Parish Councillors on observing the Member Code of Conduct.
- v) Approve procedures for the conduct of hearings into complaints against Members.
- vi) Advise the Council on the content and requirements for codes, protocols or other procedures relating to standards of conduct throughout the Council.
- vii) Receive regular reports from the Monitoring Officer and assess the operation and effectiveness of the Councillor Code of Conduct.
- viii) Inform the Council of relevant issues arising from the determination of Code of Conduct complaints.
- ix) Hear and determine appeals against refusal to grant dispensations by the Monitoring Officer.

Membership

Full Council will appoint no fewer than eleven Councillors to the Standards Committee.

The Council's Independent Person(s) will be invited to attend and fully contribute at meetings of the Standards Committee. They will not be entitled to vote.

The Standards Committee will comply with the political balance rules in Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Training

Councillors must attend mandatory training and annual refresher training in order to sit and act on the Standards Committee and Hearing Review Panel.

Proceedings of the Standards Committee

The Standards Committee must conduct its proceedings in accordance with the principles of Council Procedure Rules and Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution, other than those rules which only apply to meetings of Full Council.

Hearing Review Panel

The Hearing Review Panel will act as a Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee. It will conduct its proceedings in accordance with the principles of Council Procedure Rules and Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution, other than those rules which only apply to meetings of Full Council.

The Hearing Review Panel will hear and determine Member Code of Conduct complaints referred to it by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with procedures approved by the Standards Committee.

The Hearing Review Panel will comprise a minimum of three elected members of the Standards Committee. The Independent Person(s) will also be in attendance but will not be entitled to vote.

The Hearing Review Panel will comply with the political balance rules in Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, unless in exceptional circumstances where conflicts of interest make it impossible to do so.