

Procedure for dealing with complaints against Councillors who are alleged to have breached the Councillor Code of Conduct

Procedure to be followed at Formal Hearings

1. Preliminary Procedural Issues

- a) Introductions
- b) Election of Chairman (if Hearing Review Panel)
- c) Declarations of Interests
- d) To consider any requests for the exclusion of the Press and Public

2. Monitoring Officer, Investigating Officer or their representative

- a) Monitoring Officer, Investigating Officer or their representative to present the report and call such witnesses as they consider necessary, and make representations to substantiate their conclusions within the report.
- b) The Standards Committee/Hearing Review Panel to raise any issues or clarify any matters with the Monitoring Officer or Investigating Officer's report and to question and clarify matters with any of the witnesses called (if any).
- c) The Subject Councillor to raise any issues or clarify any matters with the Monitoring Officer or Investigating Officer's report and to question and clarify matters with any of the witnesses called (if any).

3. Subject Councillor or their representative

- a) The Subject Councillor to respond to the investigation report and call such witnesses as they consider necessary (if any) and make representations.
- b) The Monitoring Officer, Investigating Officer or their representative to raise any issues and to question or clarify any matters with the Subject Councillor and to question or clarify any matters with any of the witnesses called (if any).
- c) The Standards Committee/Hearing Review Panel to raise any issues, question or clarify any matters with the Subject Councillor.

4. Independent Person

- a) The Independent Person to provide their views.
- b) The subject Councillor to seek any points of clarification from the Independent Person or ask any questions.
- c) The Monitoring Officer, Investigating Officer or their representative to seek any points of clarification from the Independent Person or ask any questions.
- d) The Standards Committee/Hearing Review Panel to seek any points of clarification from the Independent Person or ask any questions.

5. Standards Committee/Hearing Review Panel Deliberations

- a) The Review Panel to retire, along with the representative from Democratic Services/designated Legal Advisor to the Panel to determine whether there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct.
- b) The Standards Committee/Review Panel to resume the Hearing to report the decision:
 - If further information or clarification is required, this will be reported and a decision taken as to whether an adjournment or postponement is necessary
 - If no breach of the Code of Conduct, the Hearing ends
 - If there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct, the Hearing will continue

6. Breach of the Code of Conduct

- a) Monitoring Officer, Investigating Officer or their representative to outline possible sanctions.
- b) The Subject Councillor to respond with any mitigation.
- c) The Independent Person to provide their views on appropriate sanctions.
- d) The Review Panel determines appropriate sanctions.

7. End of Hearing

A Decision Notice to be produced and published to all parties within 5 working days.