

Somerset County Council  
Standards Committee  
– 6 October 2022

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**Standards Committee Terms of Reference**

Lead Officer: Scott Wooldridge, Monitoring Officer and Strategic Manager–Governance & Democratic Services

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**1. Summary**

- 1.1.** The Standards Committee was formed following the Annual General Meeting in May 2022. Its functions include responsibility for promoting high standards of conduct by Members, Co-opted Members and Officers and for the policies and processes which support this aim; Advising on the induction and training of Members and Co-opted Members on standards of conduct; Monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct and recommends any changes considered necessary to the Code to the Council for approval; Has responsibility for overseeing the Standards of Conduct for officers and recommending any changes considered necessary to the Council for approval; Managing the members' and officers' registers of interests and gifts and hospitality; and Monitoring the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and making recommendations to the Council in respect of any proposed changes.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1.** That the Committee notes the Terms of Reference as attached in Appendix 1.

**3. Background**

- 3.1.** At the Annual General Meeting on 25 May 2022, the Council approved to dissolve the existing Constitution and Standards Committee and establish a new Standards Committee.
- 3.2.** With the establishment of a new committee, the first order of business for the committee to consider is its Terms of Reference that were approved at the Annual General Meeting on 25 May 2022.

**4. Consultations undertaken**

- 4.1.** The Committee meetings are open to all County Councillors to attend and contribute to its meetings.

**5. Background papers**

- 5.1.** Further information can be found in the agenda pack for the Annual General Meeting held on 25 May 2022 and the Council's Constitution, both published on the council's website.

**Note** For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author

## Appendix 1

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE** (5 elected members and 5 co-opted members)

Chair: John Bailey

Membership – elected members: (5 member committee political proportionality requirements waved by the Council – all political groups represented – 1 member each )

Norman Cavill  
Martin Dimery  
Brian Smedley  
Hugh Davies  
John Bailey

Groups / Seats Con (1) Green(1) Labour (1) Independent (1) Lib Dem (1)

Membership – co-opted non-voting members (5):

Alan Hemsley  
Paul Hooper  
Robin Horton  
David Stripp  
Vacancy

### **STANDARDS COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS:**

The Standards Committee is expected to be apolitical in carrying out its functions and its responsibilities. The Committee promotes and maintains high standards of conduct by elected Members and Co-opted Members of Council and Council bodies. The Committee:-

- a) Has responsibility for promoting high standards of conduct by Members, Co-opted Members and Officers and for the policies and processes which support this aim.
- b) Advises on the induction and training of Members and Co-opted Members on standards of conduct ;
- c) Monitors the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct and recommends any changes considered necessary to the Code to the Council for approval.
- d) Has responsibility for overseeing the Standards of Conduct for officers and recommending any changes considered necessary to the Council for approval
- e) Manages the members' and officers' registers of interests and gifts / hospitality;
- f) Monitors the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and make recommendations to the Council in respect of any proposed changes.

The Committee has no role in considering or determining member complaints.

### **FORM AND COMPOSITION:**

The Constitution and Standards Committee comprises of 1 elected member per political group (currently 5 elected Members) [but no Cabinet Members] and 5 Co-opted Members without voting rights. Substitutes will be permitted for the elected members

appointed to the Committee. The Chair is appointed by the Council on an annual basis. Council has agreed to waive the political proportionality requirements for appointments to the Committee to enable all of the political groups on the Council to be represented.

**QUORUM:**

A minimum of 3 elected members is required for a valid meeting of the Committee.