



Standards Committee

Tuesday 6th September 2022

2.00 pm

**Main Committee Room, Council Offices,
Brympton Way, Yeovil, BA20 2HT**

(disabled access and a hearing loop are available at this meeting venue)



Members listed over the page are requested to attend the meeting.

Any members of the public wishing to attend, or address the meeting at Public Question Time are asked to email **democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk** by 9.00am on Monday 5th September, so that we can advise on the options for accessing the meeting.

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please contact Democratic Services **democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk**

This Agenda was issued on Friday 26 August 2022.

Jane Portman, Chief Executive Officer

This information is also available on our website
www.southsomerset.gov.uk

Standards Committee Membership

SSDC Councillors

Hayward Burt
Nicola Clark

Henry Hobhouse
Jenny Kenton

Pauline Lock
Sue Osborne

Co-opted Town/Parish Council Representatives (non-voting members of the Standards Committee)

Vacancies

The Independent Persons are also invited to attend meetings (not members of the Standards Committee):

Christopher Borland and Peter Forrester

Recording and photography at council meetings

Recording of council meetings is permitted, however anyone wishing to do so should let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to the start of the meeting. The recording should be overt and clearly visible to anyone at the meeting, but non-disruptive. If someone is recording the meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting.

Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. If anyone making public representation does not wish to be recorded they must let the Chairperson know.

The full 'Policy on Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Council Meetings' can be viewed online at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/documents/s3327/Policy%20on%20the%20recording%20of%20council%20meetings.pdf>

Terms of Reference

- promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members;
- advise, train or arrange to train Members and Co-opted Members of the Council on matters relating to the Authority's Members' Code of Conduct and wider propriety issues, including issuing guidance where appropriate;
- recommend the adoption or revision of any Council Codes of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members, and to monitor the operation of such code(s) of conduct;
- deal with the assessment and determination of complaints under the Members' Code of Conduct relating to Members and Co-opted Members (other than where the power to deal with such matters has been delegated to and exercised by the Monitoring Officer). Where the investigation finds evidence of a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct and a local resolution is not appropriate or not possible, then a Hearing Panel of the Committee (comprising 3 voting members of the Standards Committee agreed by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Committee Chairman) will consider and decide the complaint.
- to take decisions in respect of a Member and Co-opted Member who is found on hearing to have failed to comply with the Code of Conduct, including –
 - Reporting its findings to Council [or to the Parish Council] for information;

- Recommending to the member's Group Leader that he/she be removed from any or all Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council (other than the relevant Area Committee);
- Recommending to the Leader of the Council that the member be removed from the District Executive Committee, or removed from particular Portfolio responsibilities;
- Instructing the Monitoring Officer to [or recommend that the Parish Council] arrange training for the member;
- Removing [or recommend to the Parish Council that the member be removed] from all outside appointments to which he/she has been appointed or nominated by the authority [or by the Parish Council];
- Withdrawing [or recommend to the Parish Council that it withdraws] facilities provided to the member by the Council, such as a computer, website and/or email and Internet access;
- Restricting contact to named officers or requiring contact be through named officers; or
- Excluding [or recommend that the Parish Council exclude] the member from the Council's offices or other premises, with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending Council, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings.
- advise on the management of statutory and other registers of interest and gifts / hospitality received;
- advise the Council on possible changes to the Constitution (except the Council and Cabinet Schemes of Delegation) in relation the key documents and protocols dealing with members conduct and ethical standards.

Standards Committee

Tuesday 6 September 2022

Agenda

1. Minutes

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 01 March 2022.

2. Apologies for absence

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (as amended 26 February 2015), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the Agenda for this meeting.

Members are reminded that they need to declare the fact that they are also a member of a County, Town or Parish Council as a Personal Interest. Where you are also a member of Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council within South Somerset you must declare a prejudicial interest in any business on the agenda where there is a financial benefit or gain or advantage to Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council which would be at the cost or to the financial disadvantage of South Somerset District Council.

4. Public question time

Items for Discussion

5. Update on Matters considered at the Previous Meeting (Page 5)

6. Standards Committee Forward Plan (Page 6)

7. Date of Next Meeting

Members are asked to note that the next scheduled meeting of the Standards Committee will be held on Tuesday 06 December at the Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 2.00pm.

8. Exclusion of Press and Public (Page 7)

9. Verbal Update on Complaints about Members Conduct (Confidential)

The Monitoring Officer will provide Members with a confidential briefing on any complaints received relating to potential breaches of the Code of Conduct.

10. Consideration of a Complaint about Member Conduct (Confidential) (Pages 8 - 17)



Update on Matters Considered at the Previous Meeting

Lead Officer: Jill Byron, Monitoring Officer
Contact Details: Jill.Byron@southsomerset.gov.uk

Members are asked to note the following update:

New Member Code of Conduct

The new Code will be recommended to Full Council in September for adoption. The timing is slightly later than the Standards Committee recommendation to align with the other Somerset district councils.

Training for Committee Chairs

This took place on 23 June 2022. The on-line session was recorded and is available for members.

Review of the Code of Conduct Complaints Process

Review and updating of the complaints process and guidance documentation is now part of the on-going work of the governance workstream established as part of the transitional arrangements for the new Somerset Council. An update will be provided to the next meeting of this Committee.

Recording of Meetings

Review and update of the GDPR implications and policies and the retention of YouTube recordings forms part of the on-going work of the data protection and information governance sub-workstream established as part of the transitional arrangements for the new Somerset Council. An update will be provided to the next meeting of this Committee.

Standards Committee - Forward Plan

Executive Portfolio Holder: Val Keitch, Leader, Strategy and Housing
Strategic Director: Jill Byron, Monitoring Officer
Lead Officer: Angela Cox, Democratic Services Specialist
Contact Details: angela.cox@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462148

Item	Date	Notes
Training for Committee Chairs	6 September 2022	This took place on 23 June 2022
Review and update of the Code of Conduct complaints process and guidance documents (new unitary Code)	6 December 2022	This is under review as part of the collaborative process under the Structural Change Order and the transition to the new Somerset Council
Record management and retention of recordings of meetings, including GDPR advice	6 December 2022	This is under review as part of the collaborative process under the Structural Change Order and the transition to the new Somerset Council



Exclusion of Press and Public

The Standards Committee is asked to agree that the following Agenda items be considered in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under paragraphs 1 and 2:

1. "Information relating to any individual"
2. "Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual"

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption from the Access to Information Rules outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Agenda Item 10

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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