

Title of Report: Remit of the Audit and Standards Committee

Report of: Mike Barker – Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

1. Purpose of the Report

To advise the Audit and Standards Committee that it has delegated power to:

- (a) consider the effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements, the internal control environment and associated anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements;
- (b) seek assurances, and satisfy itself, that action is being taken on risk-related issues identified by auditors and inspectors;
- (c) satisfy itself that the Council's assurance statements, including the Statement on Internal Control, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it;
- (d) approve the Council's Statement on Internal Control and Annual Governance Statement
- (e) approve, but not direct, the Council's Internal Control and Annual Governance Statement
- (f) review reports on internal audit activity and the main issues arising, and seek assurances that action has been taken where necessary;
- (g) consider the annual audit report on internal audit activity;
- (h) consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies;
- (i) review the scope and depth of external audit work, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and ensure that they provide value for money;
- (j) raise the profile of audit, risk management and the internal control environment
- (k) review the financial statements, external auditor's opinion and reports to members, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit;
- (l) consider the Council's arrangements for Corporate Governance and agreeing necessary actions to ensure compliance with best practice;
- (m) consider treasury management performance reports;
- (n) promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members;

- (o) assist the councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (p) advise the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (q) monitor the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (r) advise, train or arrange to train councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (s) grant dispensations to councillors and co-opted members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members Code of Conduct so far as not delegated to the Monitoring Officer including holding hearings as appropriate undertaken by a standards sub-committee set up for the purpose;
- (t) assist and advise parish councils in the Borough, if requested and as appropriate, in relation to their discharge of functions above on request of their parish councillors;
- (u) in accordance with the approved delegations, deal with written allegations that a councillor or co-opted member (or former councillor or co-opted member) of the Council or a parish councillor or former parish councillor in the Borough has failed, or may have failed, to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (v) set from time to time appropriate allowances and expenses payable to the statutory Independent Persons;
- (w) amend from time to time as it considers appropriate the arrangements to be followed in the initial consideration, investigation or hearing of any complaint of a breach of the Code of Conduct;
- (x) take any of the actions in respect of any member who after investigation the Committee decides, following a recommendation from a Standards sub-committee, has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct;
- (y) promote and maintain high standards of conduct by officers;
- (z) assist officers to observe the Code of Conduct for Employees and monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for Employees.

Standards Sanctions

On a finding that a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct, the following actions have been delegated to the Committee:

- Issue a formal censure
- Recommend to full Council (or to the Parish Council) the issue of a formal censure by the Council (or by the Parish Council)
- Refer its findings to full Council (or the Parish Council) for information
- Publish its findings by such means as the Committee thinks fit
- Recommend to the Council (or the Parish Council) that the member be removed from any or all Committees or Sub-Committees (subject to the approval of the members' Group if applicable)
- Recommend to the Council (or the Parish Council) that the member be removed from being the chair or vice-chair of any Committees or Sub-Committee

- Recommend to the Leader of the Council that the member be removed from the Cabinet, or from particular portfolio responsibilities
- Recommend to the Council (or the Parish Council) that the member be removed from one or more outside appointments to which s/he has been appointed or nominated by the Council (or the Parish Council)
- Instruct the Monitoring Officer to offer training to the member or recommend that the Parish Council should do so.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note this information.