

# Democracy and Standards Committee

The Council has established a Democracy and Standards Committee. The functions that are to be discharged by the Committee are not Executive functions and cannot be discharged by the Executive.

The purpose of the Committee is to make necessary decisions in relation to decision making governance; to make necessary decisions in relation to Elections and to have responsibility for Community Governance and Boundary Reviews on behalf of the Council. The Standards responsibilities of the Committee are to oversee and develop the Council's Code of Conduct and the overall standards of conduct for Council Members, co-opted Members, and Parish and Town Councillors of North Northamptonshire.

These Rules detail the membership of the Committee and what the roles and responsibilities of the Committee are.

## 1. MEMBERSHIP BREAKDOWN OF THE COMMITTEE

Representing	Number of Representatives	Term of Office	Method of Appointment	Voting Rights
North Northamptonshire Council	7	Appointed annually	Council appointment	Full voting rights
Parish Representatives	2	4 years	Approved by the Committee	Full voting rights
Town Representatives	2	4 years	Approved by the Committee	Full voting rights
Total	13			

1.1.Appointments shall be politically balanced. Members to have completed relevant training.

1.2.There shall be a standing invitation to the Councils appointed Independent Persons.

## 2. SUBSTITUTIONS

2.1.Named substitutes. Substitutes to have completed relevant training.

## 3. CHAIRMANSHIP

**3.1.** Term of office will be one year.

**3.2.** The appointment /removal of the Chair and Vice Chair shall be determined by Council.

#### **4. QUORUM**

**4.1.** The quorum shall be a quarter of voting members.

#### **5. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

##### **5.1. Democratic functions of the Committee**

- a) To have overall responsibility for reviewing the Council's Constitution and Decision-Making Governance and recommending any proposed changes to the Council.
- b) To have delegated responsibility for the conduct of polling station reviews and other election functions which it is necessary for the Council to decide (but not the functions delegated directly by statute to the Returning Officer or Electoral Registration Officer).
- c) To have delegated responsibility for preparing submissions on behalf of the Council to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in relation to the governance of the area.
- d) To have delegated responsibility for preparing submissions on behalf of the Council to the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for England.

##### **5.2. Standards functions of the Committee**

- a) To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils.
- b) To keep the Member Code of Conduct and where appropriate the Planning Code of Conduct under review and make recommendations to Council on any amendment or revisions to the Codes when appropriate.
- c) To advise, train or arrange training for Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils on matters relating to the Member Code of Conduct and the Planning Code of Practice.
- d) To give general guidance and advice to Members and Co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils on Members' interests and keep under review the Register of Members' Interests

and Register of Gifts and Hospitality, as maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

- e) To grant dispensations to Members and co-opted Members from requirements relating to interests.
- f) To keep the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Standards Complaints under review and make recommendations to Council on any amendment or revisions to the Arrangements when appropriate.
- g) In accordance with the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Standards Complaints, to assess and / or refer for investigation allegations of misconduct on the part of Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils, if so requested by the Monitoring Officer.
- h) To determine allegations of misconduct on the part of Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Councils.
- i) To be a consultee in relation to the Council's Officer Code of Conduct.
- j) To make recommendations to Council with regard to the appointment of Independent Persons.
- k) To oversee the Council's Protocol on Member / Officer Relations.
- l) To receive an annual report from the Monitoring Officer detailing complaints received, complaints dealt with and resolutions achieved.
- m) To exercise all the Council's functions, as specified in Regulation 2 of the Local Authority (Functions and Responsibility) (England) Regulations 2000 insofar as such functions are not the responsibility of the Council or any other Committee of the Council.

### **5.3. Sub Committees**

5.3.1. The Democracy and Standards Committee has the power to appoint such sub-committees as may from time to time be necessary to discharge its duties.

5.3.2. Sub Committees shall have a quorum of three.

5.3.3. In relation to Sub Committees established for the purpose of discharging functions relating to standards complaints, when there is a Parish Council or Town Council complaint one member must be a Town or Parish representative.

5.3.4. For unitary complaints, all members of the Sub Committees shall be Unitary Councillors.

#### **5.4. Assessment Sub Committee**

5.4.1. To determine, in accordance with the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Standards Complaints, whether standards complaints should be referred for investigation.

#### **5.5. Hearing Sub Committee**

5.5.1. To determine, in accordance with the Council's Arrangements for Dealing with Standards Complaints, complaints referred to the sub-committee following completion of an investigation into allegations of misconduct on the part of Members and co-opted Members of the Council, Parish and Town Council