

Public Document Pack



Meeting: Democracy and Standards Committee
Date: Tuesday 15th June, 2021
Time: 7.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber, The Corby Cube, George Street, Parklands Gateway, Corby, NN17 1QG

To members of the Democracy and Standards Committee

Councillors Lora Lawman (Chair), Macaulay Nichol (Vice-Chair), Lyn Buckingham, Emily Fedorowycz, Kirk Harrison, Gill Mercer and Michael Tye.

Substitutes:

Councillors Paul Bell, Jonathan Ekins, Philip Irwin and Kevin Watt (Conservative), Dez Dell (Green Alliance) and Leanne Buckingham (Labour).

Agenda			
Item	Subject	Officer Presenting Report	Page No
01	Apologies for non-attendance		-
02	Members' Declarations of Interests		-
03	Notification of requests to address the meeting		-
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Items requiring a decision			
05	Constitutional Working Group	A Wylie Monitoring Officer	11 - 16
06	Appointment of Town and Parish Representatives	A Wylie Monitoring Officer	17 - 24
Exempt Items			
07	None Notified		
08	Close of Meeting		

	<p>Adele Wylie, Monitoring Officer North Northamptonshire Council</p>  <p>Proper Officer 7 June 2021</p>			
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This agenda has been published by Democratic Services.

Committee Administrator: Carol Mundy

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Meetings at the council offices

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic seating in the Council Chamber will be strictly limited. If you wish to attend the meeting as an observer please contact Carol Mundy as detailed above.

Exempt or confidential business:

Where there is a need for the committee to discuss exempt or confidential business, the press and public will be excluded from those parts of the meeting only and will have to vacate the room for the duration of that business.

Public Participation

The council has approved procedures for you to request to address meetings of the council.

ITEM	NARRATIVE	DEADLINE
Members of the Public Agenda Statements	Requests to address the committee must be received by 5pm two clear working days before the meeting. You will have a maximum of three minutes. Statements must relate to matters detailed on the meeting agenda. A total of 15 minutes is allocated for Public Speakers. A Member of the public may only address the committee once.	5pm Thursday 10 June 2021
Member Agenda Statements	Requests to address the committee must be received by 5pm two clear working days before the meeting. You will have a maximum of three minutes. Statements must relate to matters detailed on the meeting agenda. A total of 15 minutes is allocated to Member Agenda Statements. A Member may only address the committee once.	5pm Thursday 10 June 2021

If you wish to register to speak, please contact Carol Mundy, as above.

Members' Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded of their duty to ensure they abide by the approved Member Code of Conduct whilst undertaking their role as a Councillor. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, you must declare the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless granted a dispensation.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** other Registerable Interests, you must declare the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but must not take part in any vote on the matter unless you have been granted a dispensation.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** your own financial interest (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) or **relates to** a financial interest of a relative, friend or close associate, you must disclose the interest and not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.

Members are reminded that they should continue to adhere to the Council's approved rules and protocols during the conduct of meetings. These are contained in the Council's approved Constitution.

If Members have any queries as to whether a Declaration of Interest should be made please contact the Monitoring Officer at – monitoringofficer@northnorthants.gov.uk

Press & Media Enquiries

Any press or media enquiries should be directed through the Council's Communications Team to NNU-Comms-Team@northnorthants.gov.uk

Public Enquiries

Public enquiries regarding the Authority's meetings can be made to democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk

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Democracy and Standards Committee 15th June 2021

Report Title	Democracy and Standards Committee Terms of Reference	
Report Author	Adele Wylie – Director of Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) adele.wylie@northnorthants.gov.uk	
Contributors/Checkers/Approvers		
North MO		
North S151		
Other Director/SME		

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. For the Committee to note the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Democracy and Standards Committee.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report and Appendix A outlines the Terms of Reference and constitutional requirements in relation to the Democracy and Standards Committee.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Note the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

- 3.2 Reason for Recommendations –

- For the Committee to note its duties and responsibilities within its Terms of Reference under the approved Council Constitution.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 The Democracy and Standards Committee was established as a standing committee of Council to discharge certain non-Executive functions.
- 4.2 The Committee's main functions fall within "Democratic" responsibilities and "Standards" responsibilities. These are detailed within the Constitution Part 4.1 and reproduced in Appendix A.
- 4.3 The membership of the Committee is subject to political balance and all three recognised political groups are represented.
- 4.4 The Committee is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).
- 4.5 Meeting dates were agreed by Annual Council and included within the Committee Calendar for 2021/22. These are –
- Tuesday 15th June at 7:00 pm
 - Tuesday 10th August at 7:00 pm
 - Tuesday 12th October at 7:00 pm
 - Tuesday 14th December at 7:00 pm
 - Tuesday 8th February at 7:00 pm
 - Monday 4th April at 7:00 pm
- 4.6 Meetings of the Committee will be held in the Council Chamber, The Cube, Corby.
- 4.7 Members of the public and non-committee Members may apply to address the Committee on matters relating to agenda items subject to agreed Public Participation procedures.
- 4.8 The procedure for the Committee to deal with complaints received regarding potential breaches of the Member Code of Conduct are detailed in Part 8 of the Constitution.
- 4.9 In relation to its functions, the Committee is being requested later in the agenda to establish a Constitutional Working Group, in order to review the Constitution where required.
- 4.10 There is likely to be a need going forward for the Committee to establish further working groups, for example to formulate a draft response to any Local Government Boundary Review undertaken for North Northamptonshire.
- 4.11 The Committee will need to develop an annual work programme to ensure its responsibilities are undertaken. Aside from reviewing the Constitution and considering electoral matters, this may include overseeing rollout of a Member Training and Development Programme and development of a Diversity Strategy (as agreed by the Shadow Authority on 25th February 2020 - *aimed at encouraging a wider range of groups to stand for council election should be a priority for the new council*).

- 4.12 The Committee membership will include representatives of the town and parish councils within the North Northamptonshire area. This will assist the Council in undertaking their responsibilities in relation to Standards and allow local council representatives to input on matters relating to the Code of Conduct and good practise among all elected representatives.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The Committee is being requested to note its Terms of Reference.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

- 6.1.1 None specific to this report.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 None specific to this report. The Committee is being requested to note its Terms of Reference.

6.3 Risk

- 6.3.1 None specific to this report.

6.4 Consultation

- 6.4.1 None specific to this report.

6.5 Consideration by Scrutiny

- 6.5.1 Not required on this occasion.

6.6 Climate Impact

- 6.6.1 None specific to this report.

6.7 Community Impact

- 6.7.1 None specific to this report.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 Council Constitution.

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.

Democracy and Standards Committee 15th June 2021

Report Title	Constitutional Working Group	
Report Author	Adele Wylie – Director of Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) adele.wylie@northnorthants.gov.uk	
Contributors/Checkers/Approvers		
North MO		
North S151		
Other Director/SME		

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. For the Committee to approve Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Constitutional Working Group.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Following approval of the Constitution, it was agreed that the Democracy and Standards Committee would establish a Working Group from its membership, whose primary responsibility was to assist the Monitoring Officer in keeping the Council's Constitution under review.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Approve the Terms of Reference for the Working Group (Appendix A);
- b) Agree the membership of the Working Group for 2021/22; and
- c) Agree a Chair of the Working Group for 2021/22.

- 3.2 Reason for Recommendations –

- To ensure a mechanism is established to keep the Council's Constitution and governance structure under review.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 The Democracy and Standards Committee has overall responsibility for reviewing the Council's Constitution and decision-making governance and recommending any proposed changes to Council. The Constitution is a written legal document that provides a framework and rules for how members and officers make decisions and can be found on the Council's website.
- 4.2 The Monitoring Officer also has a duty to ensure that the Constitution operates effectively. To assist in undertaking the above responsibility, Council agreed at its meeting on 25 February 2021 that a Constitutional Working Group be established.
- 4.3 It is proposed that the Group would review the Constitution and any proposals be submitted to the Committee for formal discussion. The Committee, if it were minded to do so, would then forward recommendations on to Council for determination.
- 4.4 Although not legally required, it is proposed that the Group has cross-party representation as set out below. It is further recommended that the Committee appoint a Chair of the Group for 2021/22.

Conservative Group – 3 Members
Labour Group – 1 Member
Green Alliance Group – 1 Member

- 4.5 Dates for meetings of the Group were set out in the Council's Calendar of Meetings agreed by Annual Council. These are –

Monday 21st June at 9:30 am
Monday 23rd August at 9:30 am
Monday 25th October at 9:30 am
Monday 20th December at 9:30 am
Monday 21st February at 9:30 am
Monday 25th April at 9:30 am

- 4.6 The Working Group sits outside of the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and therefore is able to be held virtually but will not be open to the press and public. This enables informal and productive discussion to take place between members and officers of the Group before they refer any matters to be considered formally by the Committee. Committee meetings are open to the public in accordance with the legislation and Access to Information Procedure Rules.
- 4.7 Due to the informal nature of the Group, where it is felt appropriate to do so the Group may invite other Members or officers to attend for specific purposes.
- 4.8 It should be noted that the Group is not a decision-making body but is to assist the Council and the Monitoring Officer in reviewing the Constitution and formulating proposals for amendment, deletion or addition to that document.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 A system needs to be established to allow for review of the Constitution. The Monitoring Officer has a duty to keep the operation of the Council's Constitution under review, and authority to make minor administrative changes to the Constitution.
- 5.2 Any proposed significant changes to the Constitution need to be agreed by Council, however it is intended that the working group would consider any changes in the first instance.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

- 6.1.1 None specific to this report.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 The Council has adopted a "hybrid" structure of governance, which although legally an Executive form of governance, allows greater Member engagement and participation through Executive Advisory Panels. Establishing a Working Group would allow for initial Member discussion and input prior to any formal recommendations for changes being submitted to Council for determination.
- 6.2.2 The Monitoring Officer has delegated authority to make administrative changes to the Constitution to reflect changes in the law, changes to the Council's management structure and other changes with no significant impact.

6.3 Risk

- 6.3.1 The Council needs to ensure that the efficiency and effectiveness of its governance and decision-making systems are monitored. Establishment of the Working Group would assist in ensuring appropriate consideration and debate of any potential amendments to the Constitution.

6.4 Consultation

- 6.4.1 None specific to this report.

6.5 Consideration by Scrutiny

- 6.5.1 Not required on this occasion.

6.6 Climate Impact

- 6.6.1 None specific to this report.

6.7 Community Impact

- 6.7.1 None specific to this report.

7. Background Papers

7.1 Council Constitution.

Constitutional Working Group

Draft Terms of Reference

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Constitutional Working Group has been established by the Democracy and Standards Committee to assist the Monitoring Officer in reviewing the Constitution and ensure it is fit for purpose.
- 1.2 It is not a decision-making body but is intended to assist the Council and the Monitoring Officer in ensuring the Constitution and associated procedures are fit for purpose, and meet the Council's aims of clear, efficient and effective governance.
- 1.3 It will undertake this role by:
 - Reviewing areas of the Constitution to ensure that they are fit for purpose and put forward appropriate recommendations for change or amendment;
 - Receive requests from Members, officers and committees to consider changes and amendments;
 - Formulate recommendations for change(s) to the Constitution for consideration by the Democracy and Standards Committee.

2. MEMBERSHIP

Five North Northamptonshire Council Members comprising –

3 x Conservative Group

1 x Labour Group

1 x Green Alliance

Officer Membership

Monitoring Officer

Clerk to the Group

Interim Democratic Services Manager

Democratic Services Representative

3. APPOINTMENT

- 3.1 The Committee will confirm member representatives on the Group at its first meeting in each Municipal Year. In-year changes to member representation may be made by the Committee.

4. CHAIR OF THE GROUP

- 4.1 The Chair of the Group will be agreed by the Committee at the Committee's first meeting in each Municipal Year (see Appointment above). If the Chair is absent from a meeting the remaining NNC members shall elect a chair for the duration of that meeting only.

5. VOTING

- 5.1 The objective of the Group will be to obtain a general consensus to any recommendations made. Where a vote may be required, any vote will be subject to a simple majority. The Chair would have a casting vote.

6. QUORUM

- 6.1 The quorum of meetings of the Group shall be three NNC members and the Monitoring Officer (or their nominated deputy).

7. FREQUENCY AND CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

- 7.1 Proposed meetings of the Group will be included in the Committee Calendar of Meetings.
- 7.2 If it is felt there is insufficient business for discussion at a particular meeting the Chair, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, shall agree to a cancellation. If it is felt that there is a requirement for additional meetings the Chair, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and other Group members, shall call an unscheduled meeting.
- 7.3 The Group is not a formal meeting of the Council and not subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).
- 7.4 The Group shall normally meet via Zoom, MS Teams or some similar platform.
- 7.5 Whilst not a formal meeting, officers will seek to comply with normal committee administrative practise i.e. agendas and reports to be circulated 5-clear days before a meeting. Urgency reports or material may be circulated with the agreement of the Chair.
- 7.6 Notes/Action Points arising from discussion at Group meetings shall be taken and their accuracy agreed at the next subsequent meeting of the Group. These notes/action points will be made available to other Members and the public upon request.
- 7.7 The Group is an internal working group and is not open to the press, public or other Members unless by invitation. All recognised political groups have representation on the Group.

Democracy and Standards Committee 15th June 2021

Report Title	Appointment of Town and Parish Representatives	
Report Author	Adele Wylie – Director of Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) adele.wylie@northnorthants.gov.uk	
Contributors/Checkers/Approvers		
North MO		
North S151		
Other Director/SME		

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Appointment Procedure.

Appendix B – Extract from the Democracy and Standards Committee’s Terms of Reference.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. For the Members to approve the appointment procedure for Town and Parish Council representatives to sit on the Democracy and Standards Committee.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report and Appendix A outlines the proposed appointment procedure for Town and Parish Representatives to sit on the Democracy and Standards Committee, including qualification criteria and substitute arrangements.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

a) Approve the appointment procedure detailed in Appendix A.

- 3.2 Reason for Recommendations –

- For the Committee to ensure that Town and Parish representation on the Committee is progressed as detailed under the approved Council Constitution.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 In approving the Constitution and governance arrangements, the Council approved representation from town and parish councils on the Democracy and Standards Committee. It was agreed that the Committee membership include two town council representatives and two parish council representatives. Named substitute arrangements apply.
- 4.2 The Committee is being requested to approve a procedure for appointment of these representatives. A draft procedure is detailed in Appendix A.
- 4.3 This Committee has responsibility under its Terms of Reference for certain matters that apply to the Council and also to town and parish councils. These are detailed and highlighted in Appendix B.
- 4.4 Any representatives appointed as town and parish representatives shall serve on the Committee until May 2025, or until they resign or are disqualified to serve (as detailed in Appendix A).
- 4.5 The procedure for the Committee to deal with complaints received regarding potential breaches of the Member Code of Conduct are detailed in Part 8 of the Constitution. This relates to North Northamptonshire Council, town and parish councillors.
- 4.6 Membership of the Committee by representatives of the town and parish councils within the North Northamptonshire area will assist the Council in undertaking their responsibilities in relation to Standards and allow local council representatives to input on matters relating to the Code of Conduct and good practise among all elected representatives.
- 4.7 It is proposed in Appendix A that those North Northamptonshire Council members who are also town or parish councillors are disqualified from being nominated to these positions.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The Committee is being requested to approve the draft appointment procedure.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

- 6.1.1 None specific to this report.

6.2 Legal

- 6.2.1 The Council is required to ensure town and parish representatives participate in the determination of complaints made against town and parish councillors.

6.3 Risk

- 6.3.1 None specific to this report.

6.4 **Consultation**

6.4.1 None specific to this report.

6.5 **Consideration by Scrutiny**

6.5.1 Not required on this occasion.

6.6 **Climate Impact**

6.6.1 None specific to this report.

6.7 **Community Impact**

6.7.1 None specific to this report.

7. Background Papers

7.1 Council Constitution.

TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES	PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES
<p>Letter sent to each Town Council enquiring whether they wish to nominate one of their members to sit on the Democracy and Standards Committee as a Town Council representative. Each nominee to provide a short letter of expression of interest detailing why they are applying and what they can bring to the role.</p>	<p>Letter sent to each Parish Council enquiring whether they wish to nominate one of their members to sit on the Democracy and Standards Committee as a Parish Council representative. Each nominee to provide a short letter of expression of interest detailing why they are applying and what they can bring to the role.</p>
<p>After close of nominations, if more than 2 nominations received a poll to be held. Each Town Council be requested to choose one of the candidates. The letters of expression of interest from each candidate to be circulated.</p>	<p>After close of nominations, if more than 2 nominations received a poll to be held. Each Parish Council be requested to choose one of the candidates. The letters of expression of interest from each candidate to be circulated.</p>
<p>Following any poll, the two candidates receiving most votes be appointed as Full Members, those in 3rd and 4th place be appointed as substitute members. In the event of a tie the drawing of lots (by the Chair or Vice-Chair) would be undertaken to determine the appointment.</p>	<p>Following any poll, the two candidates receiving most votes be appointed as Full Members, those in 3rd and 4th place be appointed as substitute members. In the event of a tie the drawing of lots (by the Chair or Vice-Chair) would be undertaken to determine the appointment.</p>
<p>After close of nominations, if 4 or fewer nominations received the drawing of lots (by the Chair or Vice-Chair) to determine the full and substitute members be undertaken.</p>	<p>After close of nominations, if 4 or fewer nominations received the drawing of lots (by the Chair or Vice-Chair) to determine the full and substitute members be undertaken.</p>
<p>In the event of any in-year vacancy to the position of Full Member, one of the Substitute Members be promoted, through the drawing of lots (by the Chair or Vice-Chair).</p>	<p>In the event of any in-year vacancy to the position of Full Member, one of the Substitute Members be promoted, through the drawing of lots (by the Chair or Vice-Chair).</p>
<p>If at any point, there is only one Full Member in place, the procedure to fill the vacancy of Full Member and two Substitute Members to be re-run.</p>	<p>If at any point, there is only one Full Member in place, the procedure to fill the vacancy of Full Member and two Substitute Members to be re-run.</p>

<p>Those appointed to serve until May 2025 unless disqualified from serving due to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No longer being a serving Town Councillor in the North Northamptonshire area • Subject to a determination that the Town Councillor has breached the Code of Conduct and been subject to a sanction as detailed in Part 8.3 Member Complaints Procedure of the Council’s Constitution s.7.2 (b) – (h). 	<p>Those appointed to serve until May 2025 unless disqualified from serving due to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No longer being a serving Parish Councillor in the North Northamptonshire area • Subject to a determination that the Parish Councillor has breached the Code of Conduct and been subject to a sanction as detailed in Part 8.3 Member Complaints Procedure of the Council’s Constitution s.7.2 (b) – (h).
<p>Individuals who are current North Northamptonshire Council Members may not apply for the position of Town Council representative.</p>	<p>Individuals who are current North Northamptonshire Council Members may not apply for the position of Parish Council representative.</p>
<p>Whilst serving on the Democracy and Standards Committee, the Town Council representatives will be subject to North Northamptonshire Council’s Code of Conduct and other associated protocols.</p>	<p>Whilst serving on the Democracy and Standards Committee, the Parish Council representatives will be subject to North Northamptonshire Council’s Code of Conduct and other associated protocols.</p>

TERMS OF REFERENCE EXTRACT

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.