

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 2 JULY 2025

Present:

Councillor Kevin Gillott (Chair) (in the Chair)

Councillor Pat Kerry
Councillor Kathy Rouse

Councillor Fran Petersen

Also Present:

A Smith	Legal Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
R Pope	Customer Services Manager
A Bryan	Governance Manager
T Fuller	Governance Officer

STA/ Apologies for Absence

1/25-

26 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor C Cupit, Councillor H Wetherall and Councillor P Antcliff.

STA/ Declarations of Interest

2/25-

26 There were no declarations of interests made.

STA/ Minutes of Last Meeting

3/25-

26 That the minutes of the meeting of the meeting held on 7 May 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

STA/ Annual Letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

4/25-

26 Committee considered a report which set out details of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter.

The report explained that the Council had received its Annual Review letter from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) on the 21st May 2025. The review contained information on how many complaints and enquiries had been referred to the Ombudsman between the period 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

There had been 9 complaints and enquiries received by the LGSCO. Of these, for 1 complaint advice had been given, 2 complaints had been referred back for local resolution, one complaint was not under investigation, 4 complaints had been closed after initial enquiries and 1 complaint was ongoing.

The Committee discussed the report. Some Members questioned how many vexatious complaints had been received. In this context, the committee discussed the impact that vexatious complaints had on staff that handled complaints and

commended the relevant officers for their hard work. It was suggested that Officers should consider providing guidance to staff that have to break bad news to members of the public as part of their role.

RESOLVED –

That Standards Committee acknowledged the report and findings of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.

**STA/
5/25-
26** **Annual Review of RIPA Policy - Further Review**

Committee considered a report which outlined the further work that had been done on the RIPA Policy since the previous committee meeting on 7 May 2025.

Committee discussed the report. It was agreed that it was a positive that all policy and guidance was now in one place.

RESOLVED –

1. That subject to Members' comments and relevant officers' comments, the RIPA policy with further amendments was approved.
2. That delegated authority was given to the Assistant Director of Governance to amend the Policy following any comments received from Members or Officers.

**STA/
6/25-
26** **Annual Report of the Standards Committee**

Committee considered a report which outlined the work that Standards Committee had undertaken in the 2024/25 municipal year. Members heard that the report would be considered by full Council at its meeting on 14 July 2025.

Committee discussed the report.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Annual Report of the Committee was approved.
2. That the Annual Report be submitted to Council for consideration.

**STA/
7/25-
26** **Remote Attendance and Proxy Voting in Local Authorities - Government Response to Consultation**

Committee considered a report which informed them of the Government response to the consultation on remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings. The report highlighted that the government plan to legislate to support permanent provision in relation to both remote attendance and proxy voting.

Committee discussed the report. It was shared that the government had indicated that it would permit local authorities to develop their own locally appropriate policies. It was suggested that there was little to do at this moment in time as there was no timescale for when this would become legislation.

RESOLVED –

That the report was noted.

STA/ Work Programme

8/25-

26

The committee considered its work programme for the 2025/26 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED –

That the work programme be noted.

STA/ Urgent Business

9/25-

26

None.