

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2025

Present:

Councillor Kevin Gillott (Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillor Helen Wetherall (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Pat Kerry
Councillor Kathy Rouse

Councillor Fran Petersen

Also Present:

S Sternberg	Assistant Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)
A Smith	Legal Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
A Bryan	Governance Manager
T Fuller	Senior Governance Officer

STA/ Apologies for Absence

10/2

5-26 There were no apologies for absence.

STA/ Declarations of Interest

11/2

5-26 Councillor K Gillott declared an interest in Item 4, Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for Housing, as a Rykneld Homes Ltd Board Member.

STA/ Minutes of Last Meeting

12/2

5-26 RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting of the meeting held on 2 July 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

STA/ Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for Housing

13/2

5-26 The Chair announced that this item been deferred to a future meeting as the officer due to present the report was unable to attend.

STA/ Code of Corporate Governance

14/2

5-26 The Committee considered a report which informed it of the review of the Council's Code of Corporate Governance. Committee heard that the outcome of the review had been submitted to Audit Committee on 28 July 2025. Members were given the opportunity to comment and suggest changes to the Code of Corporate Governance for 2026.

Committee discussed the report. Some Members suggested that the aim of ensuring openness and comprehensive engagement needed looking at as to how it worked in practice. In this context, some Members sought assurance as to the

checks and balances in place for Cabinet as the principal decision maker. Committee heard of the work that goes on in the background and role of Statutory Officers in this respect. Some Members suggested that consistent report formats had helped to contribute to openness and transparency, and that the Code of Corporate Governance should reflect that.

Committee raised further points regarding the need for greater benchmarking data and the possibility of including Members in the review team.

RESOLVED – That:

1 the review of the Code of Corporate Governance be noted.

2 the comments and suggestions made be noted.

STA/ 15/2 5-26 **RIPA - Outcome of IPCO Inspection**

The Committee considered a report that outlined the changes made to the RIPA procedure as recommended by the Investigatory Powers Commissioners Office (IPCO). The report included the outcome of the IPCO'S recent inspection as well as details of the changes that had been made to the RIPA procedure as a result.

The report stated that the IPCO inspected authorities about once every three years. On this occasion, the inspection had been carried out by completion of a survey. The outcome of the inspection was attached to the report at Appendix 1. The report set out the issues raised in the inspection outcome, which included regular training, and consideration of improvements to two sections in the Council's Policy. Overall, the IPCO was satisfied that the Council's responses provided assurance that ongoing compliance with RIPA and the Investigatory Powers Act 2026, would be maintained.

The revised RIPA Corporate Policy and Procedure was attached to the report at Appendix 2.

The Committee discussed the report. Some Members had questions regarding the mandatory training requirements across the Council. It was suggested that Standards Committee should take a more active role in monitoring the training taking place across the Council, and a report regarding statutory training for both Councillors and Officers be submitted to the Committee.

RESOLVED – That:

1 the recommendations of the inspector following the IPCO inspection be noted.

2 new paragraphs 2.14.2, 2.14.3 and 2.7.8 (as outlined in the report) be added to the RIPA Corporate Policy and Procedure to cover the recommendations in the IPCO inspection letter.

3 the changes to the processes and training in relation to RIPA be noted.

4 the intention to check annually the compliance with the rules in relation to social media be noted.

STA/ Review of the Constitution

16/2

5-26

Committee considered a report which commenced the annual process of reviewing the constitution. Members were encouraged to suggest areas of the Constitution they felt needed a review and/or change and bring suggestions to the next meeting of the Standards Committee.

The Committee and officers discussed the possible areas for review. It was suggested that in-person planning site visits, digital signatures, meeting substitutions and Ward Members speaking at Planning Committee should all be considered as part of the ongoing review of the constitution.

RESOLVED –

That the areas of the Constitution identified for review be incorporated into the Committee's work plan.

STA/ Request for Dispensation

17/2

5-26

The Committee considered two applications for dispensations from two Councillors who were also Derbyshire County Council Councillors in relation to participation and voting on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) where they had Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) as a result of also being Councillors at Derbyshire County Council.

The report explained that the two District Councillors who were also County Councillors were in receipt of Member Allowances from both Councils. As a result, both Councillors had a DPI in the forthcoming matter to be considered and without a dispensation would be required to withdraw from the Council meeting.

Committee discussed the applications. It was agreed that the dispensations should be granted, on the grounds that granting the dispensation was in the interests of persons living in Derbyshire and that it was appropriate to enable all Councillors to participate in a matter of significant importance. It was noted that Local Government Reorganisation was the biggest issue affecting the structure of local government in many years and the exclusion of any Elected Members would prevent full participation and not support good quality decision making.

RESOLVED –

Standards Committee granted a dispensation until 31 March 2028 to Councillors A Dale and S Reed to enable them to participate and vote in relation to the Local Government Reorganisation where they would otherwise have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest because they are Derbyshire County Council Councillors.

STA/ Work Programme

18/2

5-26

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

RESOLVED –

That the work programme be noted.

**STA/
19/2
5-26** **Urgent Business**
None.