

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 10 DECEMBER 2025

Present:

Councillor Kevin Gillott (Chair) (in the 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
D Parker	Housing Intelligence and Assurance Officer

STA/ Apologies for Absence

20/2

5-26 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor C Cupit.

STA/ Declarations of Interest

21/2

5-26 Councillor K Gillott declared an interest in Complaints Performance and Services Improvement Report for Housing, as a member of the Board of Rykneld Homes Ltd, and in the Requests for Dispensation item, as he was one of the Councillors who had requested a dispensation. Councillor Gillott would leave the meeting for those items and take no part in the consideration or decision.

STA/ Minutes of Last Meeting

22/2

5-26 RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2025 be approved as a correct record.

STA/ Government Response to Consultation on Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England

23/2

5-26 The Committee considered a report which set out the Government response to the recent consultation on changes to the ethical framework in Local Government.

The report set out the main points the Government had made in response to the consultation, with the intention to legislate for a whole system reform of the current regime as set out in the Localism Act 2011. The proposed measures included the introduction of a mandatory code of conduct, the power for authorities to suspend elected members for a maximum of 6 months for serious code of conduct breaches, and the creation of a new national appeals function.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

STA/ **Ethics and Integrity Commission**

24/2

5-26

The Committee considered a report which informed it of the new Ethics and Integrity Commission, which had replaced the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL), formerly known as the Nolan Committee.

The report explained that the Ethics and Integrity Commission (EIC) had been launched on 13 October 2025. The EIC promoted the highest standards in public life, reported to the Prime Minister on matters concerning ethical standards and advised public authorities on the development of clear codes of conduct with effective oversight arrangements. The EIC was not a regulator and had no remit to investigate individual cases.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

STA/ **Review of the Constitution**

25/2

5-26

The Committee considered a report which progressed the annual process of reviewing the Constitution.

The Committee was presented with information regarding the use of substitutes, following the expansion of the use of substitutes to a number of other committees in May 2025. The use of substitutes had been low since the introduction, and it was noted that for some committees Members had to undertake training before they could substitute at a meeting. The Committee agreed that no change was required with regard to substitutes at the current time.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

STA/ **Work Programme**

26/2

5-26

The Committee considered its work programme for the remainder of the 2025/26 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED – that the work programme be noted.

STA/ **Urgent Business**

27/2

5-26

None.

Having declared an interest in the following items Councillor K Gillott left the meeting.

With the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, Councillor Kathy Rouse was elected to Chair the remainder of the meeting.

Councillor Kathy Rouse in the Chair

STA/ **Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for Housing**

28/2

5-26

The Committee considered the Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for Housing, which had been prepared in accordance with

the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. The Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for Housing 2024/25 was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The purpose of the report was to note compliance with the requirement to publish an annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report and submit it to the Housing Ombudsman. The report also provided a comparison with other Derbyshire local authorities.

RESOLVED – That:

- (1) the publication of the annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for Housing, be noted.
- (2) that the submission of the report to the Housing Ombudsman as part of the Complaint Handling Code regulatory annual submissions, be noted.

STA/ **Requests for Dispensations**

29/2

5-26

The Committee received a report detailing dispensation applications from three Councillors. The report explained that this was in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) resulting from their membership of the Rykneld Homes Ltd Board, which would prevent them from participating in the discussion of the HRA budget at Council on 26 January 2026.

The requests for dispensation had been received from Councillors Kathy Clegg, Kevin Gillott and Christine Smith. The requests for dispensation had been appended to the report.

The report stated that one of the grounds for granting a dispensation was that, without the dispensation, the representation of different political groups on that body transacting the business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote on the matter. This was the situation in relation to the consideration of the HRA at Council given the current political balance of the Council.

Committee considered the applications.

RESOLVED – That Councillors Kathy Clegg, Kevin Gillott and Christine Smith, be granted dispensations, until the end of their current term as Councillors, in relation to their DPIs as Rykneld Homes Ltd. Board Members, to permit them to participate in consideration of the HRA budget setting at Council.