

Meeting:	Standards Committee
Date:	26 March 2007
Subject:	Protocol for Dealing with Complaints
Responsible Officer:	Hugh Peart Director of Legal & Governance Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Chris Mote – Strategic Overview, External Affairs & Property
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Draft Protocol

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report introduces a proposed Protocol for dealing complaints of breach of the Code of Conduct for Councillors and/or Local Protocols.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (a) To consider and comment on the draft Protocol; and
- (b) To recommend to Council the adoption of the Protocol

SECTION 2 - REPORT

The Council has in place statutory procedures for dealing with local determinations and local investigations following referrals from an Ethical Standards Officer of the Standards Board for England.

However there is no guidance for the Monitoring Officer or information available to councillors and co-opted members as to the procedure that would be followed by him if their action could be regarded as a breach of (a) the Code of Conduct, (b) a Local Protocol which results in a breach of the Code of Conduct, or (c) a Local Protocol.

In addition reference is made in the various protocols for a breach to be referred to the Standards Committee for consideration, but there is no procedure or guidance available for the Committee. This Protocol is therefore intended to regularise the position.

The document provides (a) guidance to the Monitoring Officer for dealing with reports of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct or Local Protocols; (b) information for members to be aware of the process which will be followed; and (c) guidance for the Standards Committee as to the extent of their remit for dealing with reports of alleged breaches and the sanctions available to them.

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

Chief Finance Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name: Sonal Shah
		Date: 15 March 2007
Monitoring Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name: Hugh Peart
		Date: 16 March 2007

SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact:

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Background Papers:

None