

The Standards Committee Work/Action Plan up to 31 March 2018

This Action Plan was monitored by the Committee at each meeting.

The Standards Committee is responsible for the Authority's statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the Elected Mayor, Councillors and Co-opted Members. The Committee has worked to discharge this duty by undertaking the following actions:

Action	Why	BY WHEN	PROGRESS
1. Produce a pocket guide to the Code of Conduct and the requirements in relation to interests be developed and circulated to all Members.	To assist Members in how the Code of Conduct applied to them. <i>(Standards Committee approved the pocket guide for circulation to All Members with a covering letter at the Council meeting on 20 July 2017).</i>	June 2017 July 2017	Completed. Completed.
2. Seek the further promotion with all Members of the Authority's e-learning training on the use social media.	To assist all Members in the use of social media through e-learning.	August 2017	Completed.
3. Seek the development of advanced face-to-face training for those Members who use social media regularly.	To assist those Members who use social media regularly. <i>(Event held on 10 and 11 October 2017 – 2 sessions each day - hosted by North Tyneside Council).</i>	September 2017	Completed.

Action	Why	BY WHEN	PROGRESS
4. Produce a generic 'bullet-point' list on "Chairing Skills"; to include the need for the Chair to summarise decisions on every occasion.	To assist the smooth operation of Committees and decision making.	September 2017	Completed. <i>Report submitted to 25 January 2018 Standards Committee.</i>
5. Implement the Learning Pool system to advise individual Members on training attended and completed and prompt to remind them of forthcoming / outstanding training.	To assist Members to understand what training they are required to do, what other training is available and what training they have completed. <i>(Report submitted to 31 August 2017 Standards Committee)</i>	September 2017	Completed. <i>Report submitted to 25 January 2018 Standards Committee.</i>
6. 6-monthly meetings of Chairs and Deputy Chairs of regulatory committees to be arranged in consultation with other regional authorities.	To provide an opportunity to share knowledge and best practice.	October 2017 - (1 st meeting) 31 March 2018 - (2 nd meeting)	Raised at regional meeting of Monitoring Officers - awaiting responses to assess interest.
7. Provide training to the Independent Persons on their role, this to include invitations to relevant training for Members.	To ensure that the Authority's Independent Persons understand their role in relation to ethical governance and the Code of Conduct for Members as well as the disciplinary procedures for Statutory Officers.	December 2017	Ongoing - following discussion at regional meeting of Monitoring Officers the Authority will provide this training in July 2018, following the appointment of Independent Persons for the future.

Action	Why	BY WHEN	PROGRESS
8. Monitor the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct.	To ensure that it is operating effectively.	Ongoing	Ongoing – a report in relation to the Ministerial Code was submitted to the March 2018 Committee meeting.
9. Review training available to all Members on ethical governance, ethical standards issues including arrangements with respect to the Code of Conduct; granting of dispensations, the use of Social Media and declaring interests.	To ensure all Members receive information on ethical governance and standards issues to minimise risk of unwitting breaches of the Code of Conduct.	January 2018	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Training on use of social media completed in October 2017 – see <i>item 3 above</i>.</p> <p>Pocket Guide circulated to all Members in relation to the declaration of interests.</p>

Action	Why	BY WHEN	PROGRESS
10. Promote the development of all Members to assist the Authority to fulfil its statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by:-	<p>Seeking the provision of advice and training on the exclusion of the press and public from Regulatory Committees.</p> <p>The provision of training on relevant ethical standards issues.</p> <p>The attendance of Regulatory Committee Members (including the Standards Committee) at relevant Committees of neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>Encouraging the extension of filming of meetings to include Planning Committee in consultation with the Chair and Planning Members by considering the feasibility on taking this forward.</p>	March 2018	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing - to be discussed at regional meeting of Monitoring Officers.</p> <p>In principle discussions with Chair of Planning Committee have taken place - resource issues need to be addressed to take proposal forward.</p>
11. Review the Authority's Local Arrangements for dealing with Complaints under the Code of Conduct.	To ensure that the Authority's Local Arrangements meet the requirements and expectations of the Members and the relevant legislation.	Ongoing	Ongoing.

Action	Why	BY WHEN	PROGRESS
12. Programme of invited guests – Elected Mayor, Group Leaders, Chairs of Regulatory Committees, Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee, Chair and Deputy Chair of Council, the Senior Leadership Team; and Regional Chairs of Standards Committees.	<p>Invite Chairs of Regulation and Review Committee and Licensing Committee to the 31 August 2017 Standards Committee to share their views on ethical governance and standards.</p> <p>Invite the Elected Mayor and Chief Executive to the 8 March 2018 Standards Committee to share their views on ethical governance and standards.</p> <p>Invite Chairs of Standards Committees from Durham, Gateshead and Hartlepool Councils to a future meeting of the Standards Committee to share their views on ethical governance and standards.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Elected Mayor and Chief Executive accepted.</p> <p>Invitations have been extended - responses are awaited.</p>
13. Chairs and Deputy Chairs and Independent Persons of Standards Committees to meet in a regional forum.	To facilitate a dialogue and discussion about ethical governance and the application of the Code of Conduct for Members.	Ongoing	The Authority to host an event in July 2018 - <i>see item 7 above</i> .
14. Continue production of the Annual Standards Committee Report.	Presentation of Annual Report on the work of the Committee during the previous 12 months.	End of each municipal year	Ongoing.