

A meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** will be held in the **THE CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2015** at **4:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact  
(01480)**

## **APOLOGIES**

**1. MINUTES** (Pages 5 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 25th June 2015.

**A Roberts  
388015**

**2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary or other interests in relation to any Agenda Item. See Notes below.

**3. THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND THE REGISTER OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS** (Pages 7 - 14)

To consider a report by the Members' Support Assistant on the Code of Conduct and the Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

**L Jablonska  
388004**

**4. COMPLAINTS** (Pages 15 - 20)

To consider a report by Policy, Performance & Transformation Manager on complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman in 2013/14 and 2014/15 and on an impending review of the council's complaints policy and procedure.

**L Sboui  
388032**

**5. ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW** (Pages 21 - 24)

To receive and note a report by the Managing Director on the forthcoming electoral boundary review.

**A Roberts  
388015**

**6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to take place on 3rd December 2015 at 4.00pm in the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House.

Dated this 1 day of September 2015



Head of Paid Service

**Notes**

## **1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

- (1) *Members are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and unless you have obtained dispensation, cannot discuss or vote on the matter at the meeting and must also leave the room whilst the matter is being debated or voted on.*
- (2) *A Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest if it -*
  - (a) *relates to you, or*
  - (b) *is an interest of -*
    - (i) *your spouse or civil partner; or*
    - (ii) *a person with whom you are living as husband and wife; or*
    - (iii) *a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners*

*and you are aware that the other person has the interest.*
- (3) *Disclosable pecuniary interests includes -*
  - (a) *any employment or profession carried out for profit or gain;*
  - (b) *any financial benefit received by the Member in respect of expenses incurred carrying out his or her duties as a Member (except from the Council);*
  - (c) *any current contracts with the Council;*
  - (d) *any beneficial interest in land/property within the Council's area;*
  - (e) *any licence for a month or longer to occupy land in the Council's area;*
  - (f) *any tenancy where the Council is landlord and the Member (or person in (2)(b) above) has a beneficial interest; or*
  - (g) *a beneficial interest (above the specified level) in the shares of any body which has a place of business or land in the Council's area.*

## **Non-Statutory Disclosable Interests**

- (4) *If a Member has a non-statutory disclosable interest then you are required to declare that interest, but may remain to discuss and vote providing you do not breach the overall Nolan principles.*
- (5) *A Member has a non-statutory disclosable interest where -*
  - (a) *a decision in relation to the business being considered might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of you or a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the council tax payers, rate payers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the authority's administrative area, or*
  - (b) *it relates to or is likely to affect a disclosable pecuniary interest, but in respect of a member of your family (other than specified in (2)(b) above) or a person with whom you have a close association, or*
  - (c) *it relates to or is likely to affect any body –*
    - (i) *exercising functions of a public nature; or*
    - (ii) *directed to charitable purposes; or*
    - (iii) *one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a Member or in a position of control or management.*

*and that interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest.*

## **2. Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings**

*The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are*

*open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking and micro-blogging websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) to communicate with people about what is happening at meetings. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and available via the following link [filming, photography and recording at council meetings.pdf](#) or on request from the Democratic Services Team. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be filmed. The Chairman of the meeting will facilitate this preference by ensuring that any such request not to be recorded is respected.*

**Please contact Anthony Roberts, Democratic Services Team, Tel No. 01480 388015/e-mail: [Anthony.Roberts@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Anthony.Roberts@huntingdonshire.gov.uk) if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.**

**Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.**

**Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.**

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website – [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk) (*under Councils and Democracy*).

If you would like a translation of Agenda/Minutes/Reports or would like a large text version or an audio version please contact the Elections & Democratic Services Manager and we will try to accommodate your needs.

***Emergency Procedure***

*In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.*

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## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the STANDARDS COMMITTEE held in Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 25 June 2015.

PRESENT: Mr A Hansard - Chairman  
Councillors Mrs L A Duffy, D A Giles and J E White

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of K M Baker, Mrs B E Boddington, R Harrison and M F Shellens

### 14. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 26th June 2014 and 20th May 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 15. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were received.

### 16. STATUTORY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FOR HEADS OF PAID SERVICE, MONITORING OFFICERS AND THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

The Committee received and noted a report by the LGSS HR Business Partner (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on changes to the statutory disciplinary and dismissal procedures applying to English local authorities' heads of paid service, monitoring officers and chief financial officers. Having received clarification that the independent persons who were required to sit on the panel when dismissal of any of the Officers was being considered would be those who had been appointed under the Localism Act to advise on standards issues and that these independent persons were distinct from the previous Designated Independent Person, it was

RESOLVED

that the Council be recommended to approve the amended statutory dismissal procedures and Disciplinary Policy

### 17. UPDATE ON CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

The Deputy Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that in the last year the Council's Monitoring Officer had received 16 complaints under the Code of Conduct. Of these, 15 had progressed and one had been cancelled. Members requested that details of the split between parish and district complaints. The Deputy Monitoring Officer agreed to circulate this information directly to Members outside of the

meeting.

**18. REVIEW OF COUNCIL CONSTITUTION**

With the aid of a report by the Deputy Monitoring Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Committee was updated on progress of the review of the Council's Constitution. An external firm of Solicitors, Bevan Brittan, had been appointed to carry out the review. Their initial assessment was noted by Members.

A Member working group was to be established to oversee the process. In response to a question by Councillor J White, it was reported that it was likely the review would be concluded later in the year.

**19. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

Pursuant to Minute No. 14/7, consideration was given to a report by the Monitoring Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking a dispensation for Councillor Mrs P A Jordan. The dispensation would allow her, as an employee within the NHS, to speak and vote at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) when business relating to the NHS arose. A similar dispensation had been granted to Councillor Mrs Jordan during her previous term of office and, having been re-elected, a renewal of the dispensation was being sought.

Having been reminded of the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in relation to dispensations, it was

RESOLVED

that a dispensation be granted to Councillor Mrs P A Jordan until 30th April 2019 to speak and vote on matters coming before the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) connected with NHS issues other than those affecting her own personal terms and conditions of employment and matters which impact upon her directly as an employee.

**20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to take place on 10th September 2015 at 4.00pm in the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon.

Chairman

**Public/  
Key Decision - No\***

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Update on Code of Conduct and Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

**Meeting/Date:** Standards Committee – 10 September 2015

**Executive Portfolio:**

**Report by:** Beverley Morrison, Members' Support Assistant

**Ward(s) affected:** All Wards

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### **Executive Summary:**

The Monitoring Officer has a duty to establish and maintain a register of disclosable pecuniary interests and this report provides the Committee with an update on the current level of returns and to consider any action that might be necessary to encourage those Councils who continue to fail to return their forms to comply.

### **Recommendation(s):**

The Committee is requested to consider and comment on the report.

## **1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?**

- 1.1 Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of Members of the District Council and also continues to be responsible for maintaining the Register for Parish Councils. The register has to be open for inspection at the District Council's Offices and published on the District Council's website. Where a Parish Council has a website, the District Council is also required to provide that Council with the information necessary to enable it to publish their current register on its own website. Information in respect of the DPIs of each Parish Council is presented in the Appendix to this report.
- 1.2 Each Parish Council also has a duty to adopt a Code of Conduct. All Town and Parish Councils were requested to advise the Monitoring Officer when their Council had adopted a new Code and to confirm whether it was identical to that adopted and promoted by the District Council or alternatively the version produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) or any other.

## **2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Committee is responsible for maintaining high standards of conduct by Members of the District and Town and Parish Councils, for monitoring operation of the Code of Conduct and for considering the outcome of investigations in the event of breaches of the Code. The District Council has a duty to maintain and publish the Registers of Pecuniary Interests of both the District and Town and Parish Councils. Those Members who fail to comply with the 2011 Act are guilty of an offence and liable to a maximum fine of £5,000 and disqualification for up to 5 years.
- 2.2 This report describes the current position in relation to both of these matters.

## **3. ANALYSIS/REPORT**

- 3.1 The DPI forms that have been received have been published. Any changes made to pecuniary interests also have been published.
- 3.2 Of 71 Town and Parish Councils, 60 have had their full Register published on the District Council's website. Clerks from the remaining 11 Parish Councils have been reminded to send in outstanding DPI forms as soon as possible.
- 3.3 In terms of individual DPIs, 586 out of a total of 650 have been received from Parish Councillors; 26 are outstanding and 38 are vacant. The up to date position on each Council is noted in Appendix 1. The Committee will appreciate that it is unlikely that there will ever be a complete return at any one time because of ever changing nature of the system.
- 3.4 All District Councillors' DPI forms are loaded onto the Council's website.

## **4. KEY IMPACTS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?**

- 4.1 The Member Support Assistant continues to pursue those Parish Councils where DPIs are still outstanding. Similarly, incomplete or inaccurate forms are returned to Parish Councils with a request to revise and return.



## **5. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN**

- 5.1 Parish Clerks have been contacted by email to submit DPI forms as soon as possible. The situation will be monitored.
- 5.2 The Committee may recall that they had suggested, at a previous meeting, that they or the Chairman should give notice of their intention to visit meetings of the Parish Councils where DPIs are outstanding to explain how important it was for their Members to complete the forms. Members are asked to indicate whether they still wish to pursue this option or, given the few involved, whether they would prefer the Member Support Assistant to continue to pursue the forms in the usual way. Outstanding Parish Councils' DPI's are due from:- Farcet, Folksworth & Washingley, Godmanchester, Grafham, Hemingford Grey, Kimbolton & Stonely, Old Weston, Ramsey, Southoe & Midloe, Stilton and Yelling

## **6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

- 6.1 The Council has a stated commitment to working with our communities and ensuring they get involved with local decision making by ensuring that DPI's are published and the Council is supporting local accountability and transparency in decision making.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 Not applicable

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There is no legal obligation upon Town and Parish Councils to notify the Monitoring Officer, records indicate that all Town and Parish Councils have adopted a Code of Conduct. Fifty-five of those Parish Councils have adopted a Code based on that adopted by the District Council. Twelve Town and Parish Councils have opted for the Code promoted by NALC, and four have adopted their own version of the Code. The up to date position on each Council is noted in Appendix 2.

## **9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

The Committee take a role for maintaining high standards of conduct by Members and for monitoring the Code of Conduct.

## **10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

Appendix 1 – Town and Parish Councils Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) forms (as at 10 September 2015)  
Appendix 2 – Town and Parish Council New Standards Regime and Code of Conduct (as at 10 September 2015)

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

Lisa Jablonska, Elections and Democratic Services Manager  
01480 388004

**Town and Parish Councils Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) forms  
(as at 10 September 2015)**

Town/Parish Council	No of Cllrs	DPI Rec'd	Vacancy	DPI Outstanding	NOTES
1 Abbots Ripton	6	6			CORRECT
2 Abbotsley	7	6	1		CORRECT
3 Alconbury	11	10	1		CORRECT
4 Alconbury Weston	7	7			CORRECT
5 Alwalton	5	5			CORRECT
6 Barham & Woolley	5	4	1		CORRECT
7 Bluntisham	11	11			CORRECT
8 Brampton	15	15			CORRECT
9 Brington & Molesworth	5	5			CORRECT
10 Broughton	7	6	1		CORRECT
11 Buckden	15	14	1		CORRECT
12 Buckworth	5	5			CORRECT
13 Bury	9	9			CORRECT
14 Bythorn & Keyston	5	3	2		CORRECT
15 Catworth	7	6	1		CORRECT
16 Colne	9	9			CORRECT
17 Conington	5	5			CORRECT
18 Earith	11	11			CORRECT
19 Easton	5	5			CORRECT
20 Ellington	7	7			CORRECT
21 Elton	9	9			CORRECT
22 Farcet	11	6	2	3	EMAILED
23 Fenstanton	13	13			CORRECT
24 Folksworth & Washingley	9	7	1	1	EMAILED
25 Glatton	5	5			CORRECT
26 Godmanchester	17	9		8	EMAILED
27 Grafham	7	6		1	EMAILED
28 Great & Little Gidding	7	7			CORRECT
29 Great Gransden	9	9			CORRECT
30 Great Paxton	9	7	2		CORRECT
31 Great Staughton	9	9			CORRECT
32 Hail Weston	7	6	1		CORRECT
33 Hemingford Abbots	7	7			CORRECT
34 Hemingford Grey	13	8	2	3	EMAILED
35 Hilton	9	9			CORRECT

**Town and Parish Councils Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) forms  
(as at 10 September 2015)**

Town/Parish Council	No of Cllrs	DPI Rec'd	Vacancy	DPI Outstanding	NOTES
36 Holme	7	7			CORRECT
37 Holywell cum Needingworth	13	13			CORRECT
38 Houghton & Wyton	9	9			CORRECT
39 Huntingdon	19	19			CORRECT
40 Kimbolton & Stonely	11	9	1	1	EMAILED
41 Kings Ripton	5	5			CORRECT
42 Leighton Bromswold	7	6	1		CORRECT
43 Little Paxton	15	15			CORRECT
44 Offord Cluny & Offord Darcy	11	9	2		CORRECT
45 Old Hurst	7	6	1		CORRECT
46 Old Weston	7	4	2	1	EMAILED
47 Perry	9	9			CORRECT
48 Pidley cum Fenton	7	7			CORRECT
49 Ramsey	17	16		1	EMAILED
50 Sawtry	15	12	3		CORRECT
51 Sibson cum Stibbington	7	6	1		CORRECT
52 Somersham	15	12	3		CORRECT
53 Southoe & Midloe	7	3		4	EMAILED
54 Spaldwick	7	7			CORRECT
55 St Ives	17	17			CORRECT
56 St Neots	21	21			CORRECT
57 Stilton	11	7	3	1	EMAILED
58 Stow Longa	5	4	1		CORRECT
59 The Stukeleys	9	9			CORRECT
60 Tilbrook	5	3	2		CORRECT
61 Toseland	5	5			CORRECT
62 Upton & Coppingford	5	5			CORRECT
63 Upwood & The Raveleys	9	9			CORRECT
64 Warboys	15	15			CORRECT
65 Waresley cum Tetworth	5	5			CORRECT
66 Wistow	7	6	1		CORRECT
67 Woodhurst	7	7			CORRECT
68 Woodwalton	5	5			CORRECT
69 Wyton on the Hill	7	7			CORRECT
70 Yaxley	17	17			CORRECT
71 Yelling	7	4	1	2	EMAILED
Totals	<b>650</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>26</b>	

**Town and Parish Council New Standards Regime and Code of Conduct  
(as at 10 September 2015)**

Town/Parish Council	HDC Code	NALC Code	Own Code
Abbotsley		X	
Abbots Ripton	X		
Alconbury	X		
Alconbury Weston		X	
Alwalton	X		
Barham & Woolley	X		
Bluntisham	X		
Brampton	X		
Brington & Molesworth	X		
Broughton	X		
Buckden	X		
Buckworth	X		
Bury	X		
Bythorn & Keyston	X		
Catworth	X		
Colne			X
Conington	X		
Earith		X	
Easton	X		
Ellington	X		
Elton	X		
Farcet		X	
Fenstanton	X		
Folksworth & Washingley		X	
Glatton	X		
Godmanchester	X		
Grafham	X		
Great & Little Gidding	X		
Great Gransden	X		
Great Paxton	X		
Great Staughton	X		
Hail Weston		X	
Hemingford Abbots	X		
Hemingford Grey	X		
Hilton	X		
Holme	X		
Holywell cum Needingworth	X		
Houghton & Wyton			X
Huntingdon	X		
Kimbolton & Stonely	X		
Kings Ripton	X		
Leighton Bromswold	X		
Little Paxton	X		
Offord Cluny & Offord Darcy		X	

**Town and Parish Council New Standards Regime and Code of Conduct  
(as at 10 September 2015)**

<b>Town/Parish Council</b>	<b>HDC Code</b>	<b>NALC Code</b>	<b>Own Code</b>
Old Hurst		X	
Old Weston	X		
Perry	X		
Pidley cum Fenton	X		
Ramsey			X
Sawtry	X		
Sibson cum Stibbington	X		
Somersham	X		
Southoe & Midloe			X
Spaldwick	X		
St Ives	X		
St Neots	X		
Stilton		X	
Stow Longa	X		
The Stukeleys	X		
Tilbrook	X		
Toseland	X		
Upton & Coppingford	X		
Upwood & The Raveleys	X		
Warboys	X		
Waresley cum Tetworth		X	
Wistow	X		
Woodhurst		X	
Woodwalton		X	
Wyton on the Hill	X		
Yaxley	X		
Yelling	X		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>

**Public/Confidential\***  
**Key Decision - Yes/No\***  
\* Delete as applicable

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Complaints

**Meeting/Date:** Standards Committee – 10 September 2015

**Executive Portfolio:** Councillor Darren Tysoe - Executive Councillor for Customer Services

**Report by:** L Sboui

**Ward(s) affected:** All or list individual Ward(s)

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### **Executive Summary:**

The report provides Members with information on complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) 2013/14 and 2014/15 and an update on an impending review of the council's complaints policy and procedure.

### **Recommendation(s):**

Members are invited to note the LGO local authority report for Huntingdonshire District Council and approve the review of the corporate complaints policy and procedures.

## **1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT/PURPOSE?**

- 1.1 This report provides Members with information on complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman. The report also provides an update on an impending review of the council's complaints policy and procedure.

## **2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 One of the purposes of the annual summary of statistics on complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) is to help ensure that learning from complaints helps inform service provision by fixing problems and preventing them from reoccurring to improve customer satisfaction. The data provided by the LGO shows the complaints and enquiries that have been recorded, along with the decisions the LGO have made. These numbers include people who the LGO have signposted back to the council but who may have never contacted us.

The LGO statistics detail whether a decision was upheld, not upheld, advice given, closed after initial enquiry, incomplete/invalid, or referred back for local resolution.

- 2.2 The LGO have worked in partnership with the Local Government Association to produce a workbook for councillors which explains how they can support local people with their complaints and identifies opportunities for using complaints data as part of their scrutiny tool kit. This can be found [here](#).

## **3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS**

- 3.1 There was no internal annual report for 2013/14, so the LGO statistics for 2013/14 are included in Appendix 1. This reveals that there were seven detailed investigations carried out in 2013/14; three were upheld, in summary these cases were:

- The way the council determined an application for planning permission and the extent to which a complainant had to make views understood
- The council should have considered offering temporary accommodation and issued a formal decision on a homelessness claim
- The council failed to enforce a condition of planning permission

In 2014/15 there were three detailed investigations carried out and none upheld. There has been an increase in complaints/enquires received by the LGO.

- 3.2 It is not possible to provide reliable data on internal complaints for 2014/15 as the database used to record stage one complaints received by services across the council has not been accurately updated. Following the Corporate Team restructure in November 2014 responsibility for complaints was moved to a different service area within the Corporate Team. This provided an opportunity to take a fresh look at the complaints policy and internal processes currently being used for managing stage one and stage two complaints. The aims of the review will include:

- to provide clarity of what is a complaint and when it should be recorded as a complaint
- to improve recording of stage one complaints
- to clarify responsibility for managing complaints



- to identify the level of independence required for stage two complaints
- to consider how we learn from complaints and how this is shared across the council.

3.3 The review will also include how the council manages feedback e.g. compliments and suggestions.

**4. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS?  
HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?**

4.1 A revised Customer Feedback Policy was approved in June 2012; it is proposed that the policy and internal guidance will be reviewed to ensure they continue to be effective; any risks identified with the current processes will be addressed.

4.2 A reviewed complaints and feedback policy and procedure will be completed by autumn 2015 and this will be presented to the Standards Committee. The review will ensure that the revised policy and procedure is aligned with the Customer Service Strategy.

**5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

5.1 Complaints handling links to the following Strategic Priority within the Corporate Plan - Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led council

**6 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

6.1 Members are invited to note the LGO local authority report for Huntingdonshire District Council and approve the review of the corporate complaints and feedback policy, internal guidance and procedures.

**7. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

Appendix 1	LGO statistics for HDC
Appendix 2	HDC internal complaints
Appendix 3	Current process for formal complaints at Stage one and Stage two

**CONTACT OFFICER**

Louise Sboui  
Policy, Performance & Transformation Manager (Project Support)  
01480 388032

Appendix 1

LGO local authority report – Huntingdonshire District Council

Complaints and enquiries received

HDC	Benefits and tax	Corporate and other services	Environmental services and public protection	Planning and development	Housing	Total
<b>2014/15</b> period ending 31/03/15	3	3	3	7	0	16
<b>2013/14</b>	2	1	2	4	2	11

Decisions made

	Detailed investigations carried out						
HDC	Upheld	Not upheld	Advice given	Closed after initial enquiry	Incomplete/invalid	Referred back for local resolution	Total
<b>2014/15</b>	0	3	1	7	0	5	16
<b>2013/14</b>	3	4	2	2	0	4	15

A number of cases will have been received and decided in different business years, this means the number of complaints and enquiries received will not always match the number of decisions made.

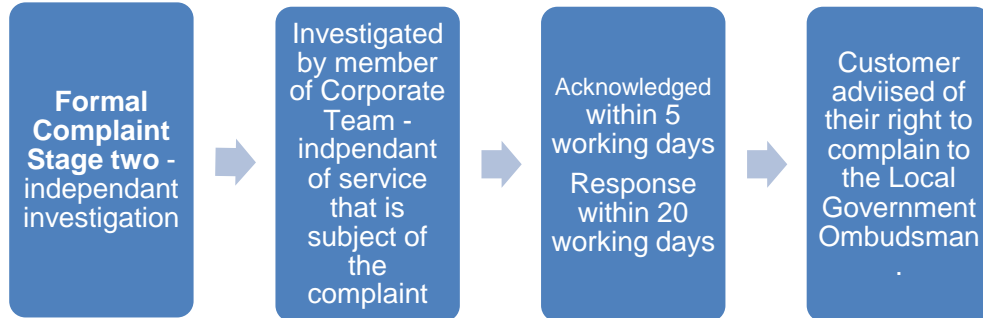
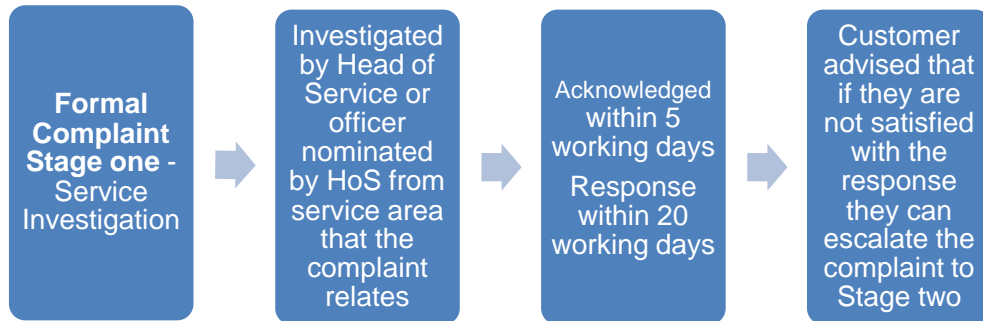
## Appendix 2

### HDC internal complaints

Year	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
Number of complaints	67	58	40	43	22 – Stage one	15 – Stage one 14 Stage two

Using the complaints SharePoint site it is possible to estimate number of Stage one complaints for 2013/14 and 2014/15. These figures suggest that there has been under-reporting. Stage

### Appendix 3 - Current stages in formal complaint process



Public  
Key Decision - No

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Title/Subject Matter:** Electoral Boundary Review  
**Meeting/Date:** Standards Committee – 10th September 2015  
**Executive Portfolio:** Executive Leader  
**Report by:** Managing Director  
**Ward(s) affected:** All

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### **Executive Summary:**

On 30th April 2014 the Council transferred from the Elections Working Group to the Standards Committee various matters relating to electoral arrangements including review of the District Ward boundaries.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBC) has recently announced it intends to undertake an electoral review of Huntingdonshire District Council. The first phase of the review is for the Council to produce a submission to the LGBC, which provides a rationale, backed up with evidence, for a proposed Council size.

The timescale for completion of this phase is very short. The deadline is 25th September 2015. The Managing Director has, therefore, convened a working group comprising representatives from all political groups to make recommendations on the number of councillors the Council needs.

The Council's submission will need to be approved by the full Council. The Standards Committee will be consulted on the draft submission.

The Standards Committee will be involved in the subsequent phases of the review, which will lead to the adoption of revised Ward boundaries for the District.

### **Recommendation(s):**

To note the intention to undertake a review of the Council size and Ward boundaries, the actions taken to date and the Committee's future involvement in the review.

## **1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT/PURPOSE?**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to acquaint the Committee with the LGBC's intention to undertake a review of the number of Huntingdonshire District Council elected Members and its Ward boundaries. It also contains information on the process and timescale leading to completion of the review.

## **2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On 30th April 2014 the Council transferred from the Elections Working Group to the Standards Committee the following matters relating to electoral arrangements:

(i) review of the District and Parish electoral arrangements including boundaries;

(ii) matters relating to the powers of a Parish Council, number of Parish Councillors and new Parish Councils and Parish Wards;

(iii) District and District Ward boundaries arising from any review; and

(iv) the periodic electoral review.

- 2.2 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBC) has recently announced it intends to undertake an electoral review of Huntingdonshire District Council. The first phase of the review is for the Council to produce a submission to the LGBC, which provides a rationale, backed up with evidence, for a proposed Council size.

- 2.3 The timescale for completion of this phase is very short. The deadline is 25th September 2015. The Managing Director has, therefore, convened a working group comprising representatives from all political groups to make recommendations on the number of councillors the Council needs.

- 2.4 The Council's submission will need to be approved by the full Council. The Standards Committee will be consulted on the draft submission.

- 2.5 The Standards Committee will be involved in the subsequent phases of the review, which will lead to the adoption of revised Ward boundaries for the District.

## **3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS**

- 3.1 Options are generated through the review process. The LGBC aims to build as many of its recommendations as possible on locally-generated proposals and, to that end, will gather as much information and undertake. It will publicise the review and will ask local authorities, political parties, parish and town councils, community groups, residents' associations, other main stakeholders and local people to engage in the process.

## **4. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?**

- 4.1 The risks are that equality of representation will not exist, that Members will not reflect the identities and interests of local communities and that the Council will not operate effectively. The purpose of the review is to reduce the likelihood of these risks occurring. To ensure the review is effective, it is

carried out in accordance with prescribed procedures with an emphasis on consultation, reliance on evidence, openness, transparency and proportionality.

## **5. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 5.1 The Council's submission as part of the first phase of the review relating to Council size has to be completed by 25th September 2015. It is intended that in the second phase there will be public consultation between 27th October 2015 and 11th January 2016 on new electoral ward boundaries and further public consultation on the LGBC's draft recommendations between 5th April and 31st May 2016. Once the recommendations have been finalised, a draft order will be laid in Parliament for a period of 40 sitting days. Parliament can either accept or reject our recommendations. If accepted, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the next scheduled elections.

## **6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

- 6.1 Working with our communities - we want our communities to get involved with local decision making. In particular the objectives to:
- create stronger and more resilient communities, and
  - empower local communities.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 The legislation relating to electoral reviews requires that as soon as reasonably practical after deciding to conduct a review, the LGBC must take steps to inform people who might be interested in it to enable them to collect evidence and to present their arguments.
- 7.2 The LGBC can consult before publishing its draft recommendations but does not have to do so; and any such consultations do not have to be public ones. The purpose of this is to gather any information needed during the early part of a review.
- 7.3 The LGBC cannot complete a review without first publishing draft recommendations, giving people an opportunity to comment on them. Only after doing this can the LGBC publish its final recommendations.
- 7.4 The LGBC can, and sometimes does, undertake limited further consultations following comments received during the consultation on draft recommendations. However, this only happens where it is minded to make significant changes to its draft recommendations and where it has insufficient evidence of wider local views in relation to those changes. These consultations are additional to the statutory requirement. The LGBC has stated that its use of consultation processes is intended be proportionate, to add knowledge and value to the review process and to allow people opportunity to influence the review's outcome.
- 7.5 In the case of Huntingdonshire, there will be public consultation between 27th October 2015 and 11th January 2016 on new electoral ward boundaries and further public consultation on the draft recommendations between 5th April and 31st May 2016

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The primary legislation in this area is the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, which consolidates and amends previously contained in the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1992 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. This legislation specifies the requirement to undertake electoral reviews and prescribes their procedures and parameters.

## **9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The cost of the review will be met from existing resources.

## **10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The review is required to have regard to:
- the need to secure equality of representation;
  - the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
  - the need to secure effective and convenient local government.

## **11 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

- 11.1 To report acquaints the Committee with developments relating to an aspect of its responsibilities.
- 11.2 The Committee is recommended to note the intention to undertake a review of the Council size and Ward boundaries, the actions taken to date and it's future involvement in the review.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Local Government Boundary Commission for England – [Technical Guidance](#)

Local Government Boundary Commission for England – [Taking part in the Electoral review of Huntingdonshire District Council – A guide for councillors](#)

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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