

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**DATE OF MEETING: 13 AUGUST 2020**

**TITLE OF REPORT: REVIEW OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Report of: Monitoring Officer**

### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To discuss possible updated Terms of Reference for Standards Committee.

### **2 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

2.2 Standards Committee express a view on potential adjustments to the Committee's Terms of Reference.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Council's Constitution dates back to the Model Constitution imposed by the Government in 2000. The Localism Act 2011 removed the obligation to follow the Model Constitution and allowed local authorities the freedom to adopt their own form of Constitution.

3.2 The current terms of reference for Standards Committee were slightly adjusted in 2012 but essentially, they represented a carryover from the 2000 version. They do not now represent a practical interpretation of the Localism Act 2011 implications. The time is right therefore to look at a possible review particularly as reviews of all the District Council's Committee terms of references is regularly referenced by the Council's external Auditors.

### **4 CONSIDERATIONS**

4.1 The Localism Act significantly change the Standards relationship between district and parish councils. Rather than each having a prescribed Code of Conduct with a very stringent and prescriptive Standards regime the Localism Act introduced a very light touch approach, with limited sanctions for breaches. There is now no wider oversight required of the respective parish councils with all councils now free to adopt their own individual Code of Conduct. The District Council's role has also significantly scaled back to more dealing with complaints but without power to impose sanctions.

### **5 THE NEXT STEPS**

5.1 The wording of a potential review of the Committee's Term of Reference (attached as **Appendix I**) reflect the lighter touch approach. The matter is more for discussion rather than action.