

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Monitoring Officer

DATE: 29 May 2008

LOCAL ASSESSMENT OF COMPLAINTS AGAINST MEMBERS

1. Purpose

1.1 To inform the Fire Authority of the implementation of new arrangements for the local assessment of complaints alleging breaches of the Code of Conduct and to consider recommendations for changes in the Fire Authority's Constitutional arrangements necessary to implement the new arrangements.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Fire Authority is recommended to approve the following recommendations:

- (i) that as an interim measure the membership of the Standards Committee be increased to 6 members comprising 4 Councillors and 2 Independent members.
- (ii) that an Assessment Sub-Committee be appointed comprising one Independent member and 2 Councillors to undertake the initial assessment of complaints under Section 57A of the 2000 Act.
- (iii) that a Review Sub-Committee be appointed comprising one Independent member and 2 Councillors to undertake reviews of decisions on the initial assessment of complaints under Section 57B of the 2000 Act.
- (iv) that a Hearings Sub-Committee be appointed comprising one Independent member and 2 Councillors to undertake the hearing of complaints and to determine what action should be taken.
- (v) that the Fire Authority's Monitoring Officer be authorised to appoint members to sub-committees of the Standards Committee in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.
- (vi) that the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Standards Committee, be authorised to approve any further matters required in order to implement the new arrangements for the local assessment of complaints under the Code of Conduct.

- (vii) that revised the terms of reference of the Standards Committee be approved as set out in Appendix 2.
- (viii) that the changes in the Fire Authority's Standing Orders as to Meetings be approved as set out in Appendix 3.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Financial:** Work required to implement the new arrangements can be accommodated within existing budgets. There may be some increased costs associated with training for the new arrangements. Significant additional costs could be incurred in the event that an investigation is required in response to a complaint.
- 3.2 **Legislative and Political :** The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and associated Regulations impose some new statutory requirements on the Fire Authority. Failure to implement the new arrangements could result in both legal challenge and the removal of powers of local assessment. The reputation and public confidence in the Fire Authority to regulate the conduct of members of the Fire Authority would be damaged by any failure to implement the new arrangements.

Minimum changes are being recommended to the membership of the Standards Committee but there are risks associated with this approach if members are unable to take part in proceedings either as a consequence of illness, holidays, conflicts of interest or being a party to the complaint.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 received Royal Assent on 30 October 2007. One of the significant effects of the Act for this Authority is the introduction of a locally managed framework of compliance with the Members' Code of Conduct, which will involve the Standards Committee in making initial assessments of any allegations that the Authority receives about member misconduct. In most cases any complaint that requires further action will be investigated and decided locally without the involvement of the Standards Board for England.
- 4.2 Regulations laid under the 2007 Act bring in the local assessment arrangements from 8th May 2008 and prescribe how the new arrangements must operate. The Standards Board has recently produced guidance on the implementation of the new arrangements which must be taken into account by local authorities when implementing the new arrangements.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Act and Regulations means that from 8th May 2008 Standards Committees will have three distinct roles in relation to complaints about member conduct
- Receiving and assessing complaints
 - Reviewing local assessment decisions
 - Conducting hearings following an investigation into the complaint
- 5.2 The implications of the Act and Regulations are summarised in Appendix 1 to the report. Key issues for the Fire Authority requiring immediate decision are addressed below.
- 5.3 The Regulations require that the Standards Committee must appoint 2 sub-committees chaired by an independent member to carry out:
- (a) initial assessments of allegations under Section 57A of the Local Government Act 2000.
 - (b) reviews of decisions not to take action on a complaint under Section 57B of the Local Government Act 2000.
- 5.4 To avoid perceptions of bias or pre-determination, members who carry out a local assessment decision under Section 57A cannot be involved in a review of the same decision, should one be requested under Section 57B. This requires that the membership of the two sub-committees do not overlap. The effect of this requirement is that the Standards Committee from which the Sub Committees are drawn must have a minimum of 6 members to provide two 3 member sub-committees. The Standards Board recommends that the Standards Committee comprise as a minimum 6 members and that this be made up of 3 Councillors and 3 Independent members.
- 5.5 However, given the cost, time delay and difficulties in recruiting an additional Independent member at this time, **it is recommended that as an interim measure the membership of the Standards Committee be increased to 6 members comprising 4 Councillors and 2 Independent members.** It is suggested that the composition of the Committee be reviewed prior to any future recruitment for Independent members on the Committee.
- 5.6 The Standards Committee must appoint the 2 sub-committees required by the Regulations so it is recommended:
- That an Assessment Sub -Committee be appointed comprising one Independent member and 2 Councillors to undertake the initial assessment of complaints under Section 57A of the 2000 Act**
- That a Review Sub-Committee be appointed comprising one Independent member and 2 Councillors to undertake reviews of decisions on the initial assessment of complaints under Section 57B of the 2000 Act**

- 5.7 Standards Committees have discretion over whether to undertake hearings by the full committee or to establish a sub-committee for this purpose. A smaller sub-committee is more conducive to the conduct of hearings so it is recommended **that a Hearings Sub Committee be appointed comprising one Independent member and 2 Councillors to undertake the hearing of complaints and to determine what action should be taken.**
- 5.8 Nothing in the Regulations requires a sub-committee of a standards committee to have fixed membership or chairmanship, although all meetings of the Committee and any sub-committees must be chaired by an Independent member. In order to facilitate the speedy appointment to Sub Committees it is recommended **that the Fire Authority's Monitoring officer be authorised to appoint members to sub-committees of the Standards Committee in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.**
- 5.9 The Act gives powers to local authorities to establish joint committees to undertake functions relating to the assessment, review and hearing of complaints. The Police Authority is believed to be considering establishing a joint committee with neighbouring police authorities. The County Council has approached the Fire Authority about whether it would be interested in establishing a joint committee to carry out the initial assessment of complaints; any appeals and hearings would continue to be undertaken by the "host" authority. Regulations and guidance are awaited on the establishment of Joint arrangements. Further discussions could take place in the light of the Regulations and guidance when issued and a further report brought to a future meeting.
- 5.10 There are a number of other issues which will need to be addressed in order to implement the new arrangements. It is expected that these will follow the guidance issued by the Standards Board for England, adapted as necessary to reflect the particular circumstances of the Fire Authority. It is anticipated that these issues will not require the approval of the Fire Authority to make the necessary changes and can be implemented under delegated powers. These include the development of procedures for the administration of the new arrangements and publicity for the new procedures. It is recommended **that the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Standards Committee, be authorised to approve any further matters required in order to implement the new arrangements for the local assessment of complaints under the Code of Conduct.**
- 5.11 The Standards Committee has also authorised the Monitoring Officer to make recommendations to the Fire Authority to bring about the required changes to the terms of reference, etc of the Standards Committee to implement the changes recommended by the Committee. These changes are set out in recommendations (vii) and (viii) above.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. • Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008 • Standards Board for England Bulletin No.33 	<p>Hinchingsbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon</p>	<p>Michael Brown 01480 444572 michael.brown@cambsfire.gov.uk</p>

APPENDIX 1 - IMPLICATIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007 AND ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Sub Committees of Standards Committees

The standards committee of an authority must appoint a sub-committee chaired by an independent member to carry out initial assessments of allegations. This is under Section 57A of the Local Government Act 2000.

It must also appoint a sub-committee chaired by an independent member to carry out reviews under Section 57B of the Local Government Act 2000.

If the standards committee appoints a sub-committee to hold hearings, that sub-committee must be chaired by an independent member.

Nothing in the regulations requires a sub-committee of a standards committee to have fixed membership or chairmanship.

Validity of Proceedings

For a meeting of the standards committee to be valid at least three members must be present, one of whom must be an independent member. The independent member must chair the meeting. For a meeting of a standards committee sub-committee to be valid at least three members of the standards committee must be present, including normally at least one elected member and one independent member. An independent member must usually chair a sub-committee meeting.

No member who took part in the initial assessment of an allegation can attend a sub-committee meeting that is considering a review of a decision to take no further action on a matter.

Application of the Local Government Act 1972

The existing rules about publicity and access to documents apply, except that initial assessment hearings and reviews are excluded from the scope of Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972. They are replaced with the following requirements:

- After the meeting, the sub-committee must produce a written summary. The written summary must record the main points considered, the conclusions reached and the reasons for them. It must be prepared having considered the Standards Board for England's standards committee guidance, which is to be published in May.
- The sub-committee may also give the name of any member subject to allegations unless such disclosure is not in the public interest or would prejudice any investigation. The record must be available for inspection by members of the public at the offices of the authority for six years after the meeting and must be given to any parish or town council involved.

Written allegations

Standards committees must publish details of the address or addresses that written allegations should be sent to. Standards committees themselves can choose how they do this. They must also take reasonable steps to ensure that the public are kept aware of address details and that any changes to them are published promptly. In addition, standards committees must publish details of the procedures they will follow. A standards committee must take account of relevant guidance issued by the Standards Board when complying with these obligations.

Modification of duty to provide written summaries to members subject to allegations

Under Section 57C(2) of the Local Government Act 2000, a standards committee must take reasonable steps to give a written summary of the complaint to the member subject to the allegation. The new regulations provide that this duty does not arise if the standards committee decides that giving a written summary would be contrary to the public interest. Standards committees also need not provide a written summary if it would prejudice any person's ability to investigate the allegation. The standards committee must take account of any guidance issued by the Standards Board when reaching a decision. It may also consider any advice received from the monitoring officer or any ethical standards officer concerned.

Once the monitoring officer or ethical standards officer has advised the standards committee that it would no longer be against the public interest or prejudicial to any investigation, a written summary must be provided. In any event this must be done before any consideration by the standards committee or sub-committee of a report or recommendation from a monitoring officer or ethical standards officer about that allegation.

Modification of Section 63 of the Local Government Act 2000

Section 63 of the Local Government Act 2000 has been modified so that the confidentiality requirements in that section are applied to information gathered by the monitoring officer in the course of an investigation. The monitoring officer can disclose this information if it is for the purposes of carrying out their functions under the legislation, or for enabling a standards committee, a sub-committee or an appeals tribunal to do so.

Referral of matters to a monitoring officer for other action

There may be occasions where a matter is referred to a monitoring officer by a sub-committee of a standards committee or an ethical standards officer, with a direction to take steps other than carry out an investigation. The sub-committee can only make such a referral after consulting the monitoring officer. Other action can include arranging training, conciliation or anything else that appears appropriate.

The monitoring officer must submit a written report to the sub-committee or ethical standards officer within three months, giving details of what action has been taken or is proposed to be taken. If the standards committee is not satisfied with the action

specified in the report, it must give a further direction to the monitoring officer. If the ethical standards officer concerned is not satisfied with the action specified in the report, they may ask the monitoring officer to publicise a statement. This statement should be published in at least one newspaper circulating in the area of the authority concerned. This should give details of the direction given by the ethical standards officer, the reasons why the ethical standards officer is dissatisfied with the action taken, and the monitoring officer's response to those reasons.

Referral of matters to a monitoring officer for Investigation

Where a matter is referred to the monitoring officer for investigation, the monitoring officer must inform the following parties that the matter has been referred for investigation:

- any member subject to an allegation
- the person who made the allegation
- the standards committee of any other authority concerned
- any parish or town council or other authority concerned

The monitoring officer must also consider any relevant guidance issued by the Standards Board, and must comply with any relevant direction given by it. The monitoring officer can make enquiries of anyone and require them to provide information or explanations that the monitoring officer thinks necessary. In addition, they may require any of the authorities concerned to provide advice and assistance as reasonably needed, and, except for parish and town councils, to meet the reasonable costs of doing so.

If any of the authorities concerned is a parish council, the monitoring officer may require its responsible authority to meet any reasonable costs it incurs. The monitoring officer may also require any of the authorities concerned to allow reasonable access to documents they possess, which the monitoring officer may find necessary to conduct the investigation.

Following an investigation, a monitoring officer must make one of the following findings:

- Finding of failure – there has been a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct of the authority concerned or, as the case may be, of any other authority concerned.
- Finding of no failure – there has not been a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct of the authority concerned or, as the case may be, of any other authority concerned.

The monitoring officer must prepare a written report concerning the investigation and findings. They must then send that report to the member subject to the allegation and refer the report to the standards committee. The report can also be sent to any other authority that the member belongs to, if they request it. The monitoring officer must refer the report to the standards committee in instances where an investigation report is sent to the monitoring officer by an ethical standards officer.

References back from the monitoring officer

In cases referred to a monitoring officer for investigation after an initial assessment, the monitoring officer can refer that matter back to the standards committee concerned if:

- as a result of new evidence or information, the monitoring officer believes both of the following:
 - The matter is materially more or less serious than may have seemed apparent to the standards committee when it made its decision on the initial allegation.
 - The standards committee would have made a different decision had it been aware of that new evidence or information.
- the member subject to the allegation has died, is seriously ill or has resigned from the authority concerned, and the monitoring officer believes that it is consequently no longer appropriate to continue with an investigation

If a matter is referred back to a sub-committee under this regulation, the sub-committee must make a decision as if the matter had been referred to it for initial assessment. It can remove the ability of the monitoring officer to refer the matter back again.

Consideration of reports by standards committee

Where a monitoring officer refers a report to the standards committee of any authority, it must consider that report and make one of the following findings:

- Finding of acceptance – it accepts the monitoring officer's finding of no failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.
- The matter should be considered at a hearing of the standards committee.
- The matter should be referred to the Adjudication Panel for England for determination.

A standards committee can only refer a case to the Adjudication Panel if:

- it decides that the action it could take against the member would be insufficient were a finding of failure to be made
- the President or Deputy President of the Adjudication Panel has agreed to accept the referral

The standards committee must give written notice of a finding of acceptance to the parties involved, as soon as possible after making it. It must arrange for the decision to be published in at least one local newspaper and, if the committee deems it appropriate, on its website and any other publication. If the member subject to the allegation requests that the decision not be published, then the standards committee must not publish it anywhere.

Hearings by a standards committee

A standards committee can conduct a hearing using whatever procedures it considers appropriate in the circumstances. But the meeting must be conducted with regard to relevant guidance issued by the Standards Board.

The hearing must be held within three months of the date of which the monitoring officer has received a report referred by an ethical standards officer or the date that the report is completed, if it was prepared by the monitoring officer. If it cannot be held within three months of the above, it must be held as soon as possible thereafter.

The hearing must not be held until at least 14 days after the date that the monitoring officer sent the report to the member subject to the allegation, unless the member concerned agrees to the hearing being held earlier.

Any member who is the subject of a report being considered by the standards committee must be given the opportunity to present evidence and make representations at the hearing orally. Alternatively, they can make representations in writing, personally or through a representative. The representative can be a barrister, solicitor or, with the consent of the standards committee, anyone else.

A standards committee may arrange for witnesses that it thinks appropriate to attend and a member subject to an allegation may arrange to call any number of witnesses. It may also place a limit on the number of witnesses a member calls if it believes that the number is unreasonable.

If the member subject to the allegation fails to attend a hearing, the standards committee may make a decision in their absence. This is unless it is satisfied that there is sufficient reason for the member subject to the allegation failing to attend. It may alternatively adjourn the hearing to another date.

A standards committee may, at any stage prior to the conclusion of the hearing, adjourn the hearing and require the monitoring officer to seek further information. Alternatively, it may require the monitoring officer to carry out further investigation on any point it specifies. However, the standards committee cannot adjourn the hearing more than once.

If a standards committee receives a report from an ethical standards officer, it may adjourn the hearing at any stage before it concludes, and refer it back to the ethical standards officer for further investigation. It must set out its reasons for doing this. The ethical standards officer must respond to the request within 21 days and can accept or refuse it. If the request is refused, the standards committee must continue the hearing within three months or as soon as possible thereafter.

Standards committee findings

Following a hearing, a standards committee will make one of the following findings about the member subject to the allegation:

- The person had not failed to comply with the Code of Conduct.
- The person had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct but that no action needs to be taken.
- The person had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and that a sanction should be imposed.

If the member subject to the allegation is no longer a member of any authority, the committee can only censure that person. Otherwise, it must impose any one or a combination of the following sanctions:

- Censure.
- Restriction for up to a maximum of six months of that member's access to the premises and/or resources of the authority. This is provided that any such restrictions are reasonable and proportionate to the nature of the breach, and do not unduly restrict the person's ability to perform their functions as a member.
- Partial suspension of that member for up to a maximum of six months.
- Suspension of that member for up to a maximum of six months.
- A requirement that the member submit a written apology in a form specified by the standards committee.
- A requirement that the member undertake training as specified by the standards committee.
- A requirement that the member undertake conciliation as specified by the standards committee.
- Partial suspension of the member for up to a maximum of six months or until such time as the member submits a written apology in a form specified by the standards committee.
- Partial suspension of the member for up to a maximum of six months or until such time as the member undertakes any training or conciliation specified by the standards committee.
- Suspension of the member for up to a maximum of six months or until such time as the member submits a written apology in a form specified by the standards committee.
- Suspension of the member for up to a maximum of six months or until such time as that member undertakes such training or conciliation as the standards committee specifies.

Normally any sanction imposed must start immediately following its imposition. However, the standards committee can decide that any sanction will start on any specified date up to six months after the imposition of that sanction.

Notification of standards committee findings

The notification provisions under the new regulations are similar to the ones under the previous regulations. All interested parties, including the Standards Board, should be notified of a decision along with the reasons for it. The standards committee must arrange for a notice to be published in a local newspaper and, if the committee thinks it appropriate, on its website and any other publication. If the member concerned is found not to have failed to comply with the Code of Conduct, a summary must not be published anywhere if the member so requests. Where the standards committee finds that the member has failed to comply with the Code, the notice to the member concerned must include the right to appeal in writing against the decision to the President of the Adjudication Panel for England.

Appeals

The member who is the subject of a finding can ask for permission to appeal within 21 days of receiving notification of the committee's decision. They can also apply for the suspension of any sanction imposed until such time as any appeal is decided. Any appeal must specify whether the appeal is against the finding or the sanction or both. It must also specify:

- the grounds of the appeal
- whether any application for suspension of any sanction is made
- whether the person consents to the appeal being dealt with in writing only

The application for permission to appeal or to suspend a sanction will be decided by the President of the Adjudication Panel for England. In the absence of the President this will be decided by the Deputy President, unless they consider that special circumstances render a hearing desirable.

If permission is refused, or if a suspension of a sanction is not granted, the notice given to the member concerned will give the reasons. The conduct of appeals, the composition of appeals tribunals and the procedures to be followed are essentially the same as under the previous regulations.

Outcome of appeals

Where an appeals tribunal dismisses a standards committee's finding, the committee's decision, including any sanction imposed, will cease to have effect from the date of the dismissal. Where an appeals tribunal upholds the finding of a standards committee that there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct but that no sanction should be imposed, it may confirm the committee's decision to impose no sanction. Alternatively, it may impose any sanction which was available to that standards committee.

Where an appeals tribunal upholds a standards committee's finding, or part of a finding, that there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct, it may confirm any sanction imposed by that committee. Alternatively, it may substitute any other sanction which was available to that standards committee. Normally any sanction imposed must start immediately following its imposition by the appeals tribunal.

However, an appeals tribunal can decide that any sanction imposed should start on any specified date up to six months after the imposition of that sanction. The appeals tribunal must arrange for a summary of its decision to be published in one or more newspapers circulating in the area of the authorities concerned.

APPENDIX 2 TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Deletions are struck through, additions are in bold.

Terms of Reference

To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members of the Fire Authority.

To advise the Authority on the adoption or revision of the Members Code of Conduct.

To assist members to observe the Members Code of Conduct.

To monitor the operation of the Members Code of Conduct.

To advise, train or arrange to train members on matters relating to the Members Code of Conduct.

To grant dispensations to members from the requirements relating to interests set out in the Members Code of Conduct.

~~To deal (including by way of hearing representations) with any reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal, and any report from an ethical standards officer or the monitoring officer on any matter which is referred by an ethical standards officer to the monitoring officer.~~

To undertake the local assessment of complaints alleging breaches of the Code of Conduct and determining what action should be taken.

To determine requests to review decisions not to take action on an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct.

To undertake hearings into alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct.

To determine the appropriate sanctions or actions in response to breaches of the Code of Conduct.

To advise the Authority on the adoption and revision of a Protocol governing the relationship between Councillors and Officers.

To advise the Authority on all matters relating to the applicability, award and level or any other matter relating to allowances payable to members in accordance with the Local Authority's (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

To monitor and maintain the Register of Interests for Members and Principal Officers and Directors

To grant and supervise the giving of dispensations to persons who are disqualified from certain political activities under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, having regard to any advice which may be issued thereon by the Secretary of State.

The proceedings of the Standards Committee shall be as determined by the Local Government Act 2000 and regulations and guidance made there-under and otherwise as determined by the Committee itself.

The Standards Committee shall have power to report, with recommendations, to the Authority at such times and in such manner as it thinks fit.

~~The Standards Committee may appoint a Sub-Committee to consider (including by way of hearing representations) any reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal, and any report from an ethical standards officer or the monitoring officer on any matter which is referred by an ethical standards officer to the monitoring officer.~~

The Standards Committee shall appoint the following 3 Sub Committees :

- **An Assessment Sub-Committee comprising one Independent member and 2 Councillors to undertake the initial assessment of complaints under Section 57A of the Local Government Act 2000.**
- **A Review Sub-Committee comprising one Independent member and 2 Councillors to undertake reviews of decisions on the initial assessment of complaints under Section 57B of the Local Government Act 2000.**
- **A Hearings Sub-Committee comprising one Independent member and 2 Councillors to undertake the hearing of complaints and to determine what action should be taken.**

Membership of the Committee: 5 6 Members - 3 4 members of the Fire Authority (i.e. 4 2 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 Labour) and two independent members.

*Any Sub Committees appointed by the Standards Committee shall have three members as follows: 2 members of the Fire Authority and one independent member. **The Fire Authority's Monitoring Officer is authorised to appoint members to sub-committees of the Standards Committee in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.***

The Standards Committee and any Sub Committee thereof will be chaired by one of the Independent members.

Quorum: 3 of which one must be an independent (non-Authority) member except where the independent members are prevented or restricted from participating in any business of the Authority by virtue of its Code of Conduct.

APPENDIX 3 REVISIONS TO THE FIRE AUTHORITY'S STANDING ORDERS AS TO MEETINGS

Additions in bold.

Paragraph 4 (d) third bullet to read:

- Standards Committee, **Assessment Sub Committee, Review Sub Committee and Hearings Sub Committee** – three members, provided there is at least one independent (non Authority) member present except where the independent members are prevented or restricted from participating in any business of the Authority by virtue of its Code of Conduct.

Paragraph 12 be amended to read:

- a) Subject to c) **and d)** below a member of either of the two constituent authorities who, on application to the Monitoring Officer to the Fire Authority, is able to establish a need to know, may inspect any document which has been considered by the Authority and/or any of its Committees and, if copies are available, shall on request be supplied with a copy of such document.
- b) Any members aggrieved by a refusal to allow the inspection of any document **under paragraph a) above** may require the Monitoring Officer to refer their application to the Authority whose decision shall be final.
- c) The Monitoring Officer may decline to allow inspection of any document which in their opinion is or, in the event of legal proceedings, would be protected by privilege arising from the relationship of solicitor and client.
- d) The Monitoring Officer may decline to allow inspection of any document or other information relating to an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct where the Standards Committee or its sub-committees has agreed that it be withheld.**

The provisions on the inspection of documents relating to items to be considered by the Authority and any of its Committees are set out in Section 100F of the Local Government Act 1972.

Where a Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee is considering an allegation against a member under Section 57A of the Local Government Act 2000 or a request to review a decision to take no action under Section 57B of the Act, there is no public right of access to the meetings or documents. The Sub-Committee is required to produce a written summary of its consideration of those matters, which is to be made available to the public. Otherwise, the proceedings of Standards Committees and Sub-Committees of Standards Committees are to be open to the public in a manner similar to that in which other proceedings of local authorities are made open (see Part 5A of the Local Government Act 1972)