



Committee and date
Standards Committee

28 January 2010

4.00 p.m.

Item

6

Public
Paper

Local Assessment of Complaints

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Summary

Shropshire Council has had responsibility for the local assessment of complaints about Councillors within the whole of Shropshire since April 2009. Feedback from the members complained about and from training sessions held shows that the lack of information about the complaint is likely to add to the difficulties encountered by the member complained about. It also limits their opportunity to make amends prior to the Assessment Sub Committee reaching its decision. The Standards Committee is asked to consider increasing the amount of information available to the member complained of with regard to the detail of the allegation

Recommendations

- A. That the Assessment Criteria for dealing with complaints regarding member conduct be amended to provide that upon receipt of a complaint, the member complained of be advised of the substance of the complaint.

Report

1. The Assessment Criteria for dealing with complaints regarding member conduct operated by Shropshire Council was adopted by the Shropshire County Council on 08 May 2010. As the continuing Authority at the time of the reorganisation of Local Government in Shropshire, the assessment criteria continue to be effective.
2. During training sessions which have been held since April 2010, many Councillors within Shropshire have expressed concern that where a complaint is made about them, they will be told only that a complaint has been made and the paragraph of the code to which the allegation relates. They would prefer to also be told of the substance of the complaint at that stage.

3. Feedback from members complained about centres on the lack of information available to them with regard to the complaint throughout the process that has caused additional worry and stress.
4. The Monitoring Officer has the opportunity to seek a local resolution to a complaint before it is considered by the Assessment Sub Committee. This is not possible where the member complained about is not told about the nature of the allegation.
5. Members of the Standards Committee are asked to approve an amendment to the Assessment Criteria for dealing with complaints regarding member conduct operated by Shropshire Council to enable the member complained of to be advised that a complaint has been made, the relevant paragraphs of the code and the nature of the complaint.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)	
Assessment Criteria for dealing with complaints regarding member conduct	
Human Rights Act Appraisal	The contents of this report are compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998
Environmental Appraisal	These proposals will have no significant impact on the environment
Risk Management Appraisal	Reduce the possibility of public money being spent on an investigation where a simple resolution might be achieved locally.
Community / Consultations Appraisal	N/A
Cabinet Member	N/A
Local Member	All
Appendices	N/A