

**Report To:** Corporate Governance Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014

**Lead Member / Officer:** Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer/ Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

**Report Author:** Lisa Jones, Deputy Monitoring Officer.

**Title:** Corporate Governance Committee Terms of Reference

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**1. What is the report about?**

To seek Members views on transferring areas from this Committee's Terms of Reference, to the Councils Standards Committee.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

Members will be aware that the Committee's work load is increasing and the reason for this report is to generate a debate and obtain a view on transferring areas that could potentially be dealt with by Standards Committee.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

That the Corporate Governance Committee provide a steer in respect of the details suggested in the report.

**4. Report details.**

The Council's Standards Committee current 'jurisdiction' only covers monitoring compliance with the Members Code of Conduct, raising standards of ethics and probity, training on the Code of Conduct and complaints regarding members and dealing with references from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) ; including playing a role in the Councils Self Regulatory Protocol. The Committee is scheduled to meet approximately every other month and meetings are completed within 2 hours. Membership of the Standards Committee comprises 2 County Councillors, 4 independent members who are recruited via a public advert and 1 Community Council member. The Committee can only be quorate when the majority in attendance are independent.

Some local authorities have extended the remit of their Standards Committees to cover issues such as whistleblowing and complaints to the PSOW by members of the public regarding maladministration.

There is an opportunity therefore for the Council to consider increasing the workload of this Committee and transferring it to the Standards Committee. The final decision is one for the Full Council and would be incorporated in the review of the Constitution; however this report is seeking the views of the Corporate Governance Committee on whether there is an appetite for this approach.

Discussions between the respective Chairs of these Committees appears to be that there is room for debate on transferring some or all of the following areas to Standards Committee (in addition to it retaining its current remit) : -

- a) Whistleblowing
- b) Indemnities for Officers and Members,
- c) Complaints including PSOW Complaints by members of the public about the Council (maladministration)
- d) Information Commissioner Complaints and review of the Councils activities under the Information Legislation (Data Protection and FOI)

**5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

Improved practices will contribute to the priority of becoming a high performing Council.

**6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

There are no implications for services as they will still be required to present their reports to a committee. There may be some increase in attendance costs to independent members of the Standards Committee as they may need to sit for a longer period in Committee. All other costs are met under current resources.

**7. What consultations have been carried out.**

There has been initial consultation with both Chair of Corporate Governance and Standards Committee. The issues were very briefly debated at Standards Committee on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014 and there was an interest in taking on a wider remit.

**8. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

Not required at this stage, but will be required if there is proposals to transfer areas to another committee.

**9. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

There are risks that there could be a duplication of work if matters are taken to both Committees.

**10. Power to make the Decision**

No decision is required as the final decision on this issue would be one for the Full Council under the Local Government Act 2000.