

Agreed items and priorities for the review of local assessment and determination of complaints

	Summary of issue	Reason/comments	Priority
1	Review of publicity to the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure appropriate levels of awareness. A new performance indicator is to be introduced to measure the % of people who are aware of the elected member complaints system. 	High
Note: In relation to 1 above, it was agreed that this should link in with publicity of both the Members' Code of Conduct and the work/role of the Standards Committee, such publicity to be undertaken at both district and parish level.			
2	Joint working with neighbouring authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulations to be published in May to enable this. 	Low
3	Constitution of the main Standards Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there sufficient members to deal appropriately with all aspects of the process? Should a recommendation to Council be considered to increase the size of the Committee? Should there be a Cabinet member on the Committee? Should parish representatives be elected (as opposed to co-opted?) 	High
4	Composition of the sub-committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separation of membership of assessment and final determination sub-committees? Are the sub-committees working well? Final Determination Sub-Committee composition – should it be revisited? 	Defer until have experience of final determination hearings.
5	Receipt of Investigating Officer's report (Regulation 17(1) hearing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should this be undertaken by the full Standards Committee or a sub-committee? 	Defer until have experience of hearings.

6	Monitoring Officer pre-complaint protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some authorities instruct the MO to try to resolve complaints before referring them to the Assessment Sub-Committee – should this be considered? 	Rejected outright
7	Complaint form to be reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider it from the perspective of members of the public. Should it be more specific in terms of identifying the part of the Code which has been breached? Should it ask the complainant to identify the remedy sought (to identify complaints about service delivery etc rather than conduct). Should it be scrapped? 	High (7, 8 & 9 to be taken together)
8	Guidance to be reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider it from the perspective of members of the public. Inclusion of flow charts. 	
9	Review of website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider it from the perspective of members of the public. Submission of complaints on-line. 	
10	Review of report presented to the Assessment Sub-Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should it include a suggestion as to the part of the Code which may have been breached? Should it include recommendations from officers? Should it include transcripts of meetings or other documentation other than minutes or other publicly available documents? Should the sub-committee's powers be clearly set out? 	Low

11	Review of assessment criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These were based on those in the SBE guidance. Based on practical experience, could these be improved? 	High
12	Notification to subject member of complaint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At what point should the subject member be notified of the complaint? Currently they are not notified until after the Assessment Sub-Committee has met. 	High
13	Decision Notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are currently based on the SBE model. Could they be improved? • Should they include details of the members sitting on the committee? <i>(NB – consider the difference between Regulation 8 and Regulation 11 notices)</i> • Should these be published more widely? • Should they include more information about review? 	High
14	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should a form be developed and sent out as a matter of course in the case of each case not referred for investigation? • Should these take the form of a re-hearing or a review of the adequacy of the process? (There is a divergence of opinion on this in practice.) • Should the same officer advise the review sub-committee as advised the assessment sub-committee? 	High
15	Referrals to the MO for other action/adjournment of assessment to enable the MO to explore the possibility of other action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be explored in the light of advice from the SBE. 	Await SBE guidance.

16	Referrals to the Adjudication Panel under Regulation 17 (serious cases not appropriate for consideration by the Standards Committee)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The prior consent of the President of the APE is required before the Standards Committee may refer a matter to the APE. How is the MO to be authorised to seek the consent of the APE prior to consideration of the matter by the Standards Committee. 	Low Leave until have experience of APE referrals.
17	Final Determinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much guidance should be given to the subject member on how to prepare? Emphasise the slot in the process for the subject member to make representations on sanctions and any mitigating circumstances. 	Officers to implement separately.
18	Parish Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notification to parish councils concerning complaints (see Town & Parish Standard issue 4), to prepare advice for parish councils. 	Officers to liaise separately with the parishes on this.
19	Recommendations to full Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who should present these on behalf of the Standards Committee? 	Low/medium