

From: Ben Watts - General Counsel

To: The Standards Committee - 31 July 2025

Subject: Appointment of a Hearing Panel

Classification: **Unrestricted**

1. Introduction

- a. As set out in another paper on this Agenda, the Standards Committee Hearing Panel is convened whenever a complaint against a Member has reached the stage where a formal investigation has been completed and the Monitoring Officer considers that informal resolution is not appropriate or unlikely to be achieved.
- b. It is appropriate and in line with normal practice for the Standards Committee to appoint a Hearing Panel at an early stage in the Council term so that the Panel is established and ready to be convened if and when necessary.
- c. The Panel consists of three Members drawn from the Standards Committee.
- d. In line with past practice, the recommendation is that the Hearing Panel consists of:
 - 1. The Chair of this Committee.
 - 2. The Vice-Chair of this Committee.
 - 3. One other Member.
- e. Political proportionality rules apply and therefore two of the Panel Members must be from the largest Political Group on the Council and the third should be drawn from the second largest.
- f. In the event of an appointed Panel Member being unavailable, or having a conflict of interest, then the relevant Group will be asked to name a substitute in accordance with normal procedures.

2. Recommendation:

The Standards Committee is asked to appoint a Hearing Panel.

3. Appendices

None.

4. Background Documents

None.

5. Report Author and Relevant Director

Ben Watts, General Counsel
03000 416814
benjamin.watts@kent.gov.uk