

By: Geoff Wild, Director of Governance and Law

To: Standards Committee – 29 July 2015

Subject: Changes to the Hearing Panel Procedure for an Alleged Breach of Misconduct by an Elected Member

Summary: This report seeks approval to the amendments to the Hearing Panel Procedure part of the operational arrangements

1. Introduction

At its meeting on 19 July 2012, the County Council approved the Kent Code of Conduct for elected Members, which came into operation retrospectively on 1 July 2012. The Code represented the culmination of the Monitoring and Legal Officers of the Kent Districts and the County Council coming together to prepare a universal Code across the County for all local authorities. The majority of Councils in Kent approved the Code.

2. Monitoring of the Code

- (1) Since the introduction of the Code, the Monitoring Officers have met on a regular basis to review its operation and to recommend any amendments if necessary.
- (2) The Code is backed up by the operational arrangements agreed by the local authorities. Part of these operational arrangements refer to the hearing procedure which would be invoked should a complaint of alleged misconduct by an elected Member reach this stage.
- (3) The Monitoring Officers have recently met and agreed some minor amendments to the Hearing Panel procedure as set out in the attached tracked change copy of this report.

3. Disclosable Pecuniary Interest Form

- (1) At a recent meeting of the Monitoring Officers it was also agreed that an elected Member should declare under that part of the form headed 'employment' that they are an elected Member of the County Council as well as any other local authority.
- (2) I have amended each elected Member's form and uploaded this to the County Council website.

4. Recommendations:

The Standards Committee is asked to:

- (1) Approve the amendments to the Hearing Panel Procedure in the operational arrangements for the Kent Code of Conduct for elected Members; and
- (2) Note that elected Members will be invited to declare their membership of any local authority on their declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form.