

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

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| <b>Date of Meeting</b> | Monday, 15th May 2023      |
| <b>Report Subject</b>  | Draft Annual Report        |
| <b>Report Author</b>   | Chief Officer (Governance) |

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 introduced a duty on Standards Committees to produce an annual report and specified some of the content that must be included.

The first draft annual report is attached for approval.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | That the attached draft annual report is approved. |
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### REPORT DETAILS

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| <b>1.00</b> | <b>EXPLAINING THE ANNUAL REPORT</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1.01        | Section 63 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires every Standards Committee to produce an annual report for each financial year as soon as reasonably practical after the end of the year to which it relates.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1.02        | Such reports must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) describe how the Committee's functions have been discharged during the financial year.</li> <li>(2) In particular, the report must include a summary of— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) what has been done to discharge the general and specific functions conferred on the Committee [to promote and maintain high standards of</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

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|      | <p>conduct by the Members and co-opted Members of the authority and Town and Community Councils, and to assist Members and co-opted Members of the authority to observe the authority's Code of Conduct.]</p> <p>(b) reports and recommendations made or referred to the Committee [by the Ombudsman]</p> <p>(c) action taken by the Committee following its consideration of such reports and recommendations</p> <p>(d) notices given to the Committee [by the Adjudication Panel for Wales following a hearing];</p> <p>(3) An annual report by a standards Committee of a County Council or County Borough Council in Wales must include the Committee's assessment of the extent to which leaders of political groups on the Council have complied with their duties under section 52A(1) during the financial year.</p> <p>The Committee may also include</p> <p>(4) recommendations to the authority about any matter in respect of which the Committee has functions.</p> <p>The report must be considered by Full Council within 3 months of it being referred to it.</p> |
| 1.03 | <p>The attached draft annual report includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Statistical information (number of meetings, Membership etc)</li> <li>2. An overview of the work undertaken/reports considered;</li> <li>3. Commentary on the work of the Committee on its duties to promote and maintain high standards</li> <li>4. Its assessment of the compliance of Group Leaders with their duty to promote good behaviour by their group Members based on reports from the Group Leaders themselves as per the agreed process</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1.04 | <p>Members are invited to comment on the content of the report. Its format and layout will be reviewed by the graphic design team in order to improve the presentation.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

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| <b>2.00</b> | <b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>                           |
| 2.01        | The report has been produced within existing resources |

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| <b>3.00</b> | <b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>                                                                                             |
| 3.01        | Group Leaders have been asked for their own assessment of compliance with the duty to promote good behaviour by Members of their group. |

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| <b>4.00</b> | <b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>                                                                                                                                   |
| 4.01        | The principal risk associated with the annual report is that a group leader might be in breach of the Code of Conduct if s/he has failed to fulfil their |

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|  | duty to promote good behaviour. Conversely, overly positive reporting of inadequate performance by the Group Leader could simply mask a breakdown of one of the levers of governance. Properly assessing levels of compliance is therefore important and the Committee has agreed a process to enable it to undertake the task. This is clearly the first year in which the process has been introduced and it may therefore require review/revision in future years. |
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| <b>5.00</b> | <b>APPENDICES</b>                |
| 5.01        | Appendix 1 – draft annual report |

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| <b>6.00</b> | <b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 6.01        | None<br><br><b>Contact Officer:</b> Gareth Owens, Chief Officer (Governance)<br><b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702344<br><b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk">gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk</a> |

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| <b>7.00</b> | <b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>                                                          |
| 7.01        | None – all technical words or phrases are explained in the context of the report. |