

MAKE-UP OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Standards Committee of Cheshire East Council is drawn widely from across the spectrum of the authority. There are eight members who are elected Members and reflect the political constitution of the Council as a whole, along with three Town/Parish Councillors.

Very importantly, and additionally, there are five appointed and non-political independent members selected on merit and experience and these include the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Committee and by this means, the Committee conserves not only independence of thought and deliberation, but also remains distanced from political influence. Further details of the Committee's role and contact details of the individuals appointed to the Committee are available at the Council's website: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk.

MAKING A COMPLAINT

The Code of Conduct is available to, and accessible by, Council members and the general public alike and its principal purpose is to maintain high standards of conduct, integrity and good governance in local administration. If you consider that a Member of Cheshire East Council or a Member of a Town or Parish Council has breached the Code of Conduct for Councillors you should send your complaint in writing, to;

The Monitoring Officer, Cheshire East Council, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ.

You can do this by using the complaint form available from the Monitoring Officer or you may be able to download it from the Council Website (www.cheshireeast.gov.uk). If you make a written complaint you should be aware that the Standards Committee is unlikely to be able to keep your identity confidential.

Before you make a complaint please read the Code of Conduct available on the website or from the Monitoring Officer. You may find more information from the Standards Board for England (www.standardsboard.gov.uk, The Standards Board for England, Fourth Floor, Griffin House, 40 Lever Street, Manchester, M1 1BB).

If you are unhappy with the way a Councillor has behaved you may wish before lodging a formal complaint in writing to discuss the issue in confidence with the Monitoring Officer or his representative. (Chris Chapman, Tel. No. 01270 686637). The Standards Committee wants to ensure that complaints are dealt with as speedily and efficiently as possible. By discussing your complaint, a simple and speedy solution may be found.

If you do make a written complaint you will be told in writing what will happen to it. If the authority decides that the Standards Committee will deal with the complaint, a meeting of three of the Committee Members, chaired by one of the

Independent Members will decide what happens next. This meeting will be called within 20 days of receiving your complaint. The Committee may decide not to take any further action. In this situation you may ask for a review within 30 days of receiving this decision. A Review Committee of three different Members, again chaired by an Independent Member, will look at the complaint again. If either of these Committees decides on further action they may then formally investigate your complaint or in very serious cases send it to the Standards Board for England.

Cheshire East Council Standards Committee exists to help ensure that you have complete confidence in the integrity of your local councillors. If you do have a complaint, the Standards Committee will do all it can to ensure that it is dealt with fairly and effectively.