

## ***STANDARDS COMMITTEE*** ***Agenda***

Date Thursday 5 March 2026

Time 6.00 pm

Venue JR Clynes Building, Cultural Quarter, Greaves Street, Oldham, OL1 1AL

Notes 1. Declarations of Interest- If a Member requires advice on any item involving a possible declaration of interest which could affect his/her ability to speak and/or vote he/she is advised to contact Alex Bougatef or Constitutional Services at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

2. Contact officer for this agenda is Constitutional Services or email [constitutional.services@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:constitutional.services@oldham.gov.uk)

3. Public Questions - Any Member of the public wishing to ask a question at the above meeting can do so only if a written copy of the question is submitted to the contact officer by 12 noon on Monday, 2 March 2026.

4. Filming - The Council, members of the public and the press may record / film / photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Constitutional Services Officer who will instruct that they are not included in the filming.

Please note that anyone using recording equipment both audio and visual will not be permitted to leave the equipment in the room where a private meeting is held.

Membership of the STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
Councillors Harrison (Chair), Byrne, Hindle, Marland, Ghafoor, Nasheen and Shuttleworth

Item No

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Urgent Business

Urgent business, if any, introduced by the Chair.

3 Declarations of Interest

To Receive Declarations of Interest in any Contract or matter to be discussed at the meeting.

4 Public Question Time

To receive Questions from the Public, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

5 Minutes (Pages 3 - 10)

The Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2025 and the Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Sub-Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025 are attached for approval.

6 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that discussions may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, under paragraph 3 as defined in the provisions of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

7 Member/Officer Protocol

To receive a report on the Member/Officer Protocol (Report to follow)

8 Member/Officer Survey

To receive an update on the Member/Officer Survey (Report to follow)

9 Standards Complaints Update

To receive an update on Standards Complaints.

**Present:** Councillor Harrison (Chair)  
Councillors Kouser, Bashforth, Byrne, Chauhan and Williamson

Also in Attendance:  
Councillor Roger Blackmore (Saddleworth Parish Council)  
Karen Williams (Independent Person)  
Alex Bougatef (Interim Borough Solicitor/Monitoring Officer)  
Peter Thompson (Constitutional Services)

1           **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hindle and from Town Councillor Lee Navesey (Shaw and Crompton Town Council).

2           **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

3           **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

4           **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions for this meeting of the Standards Committee to consider.

5           **MINUTES**

Resolved:  
That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee, held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2025, be approved as a correct record.

6           **COMPOSITION OF STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Interim Borough Solicitor which advised that the purpose of the Standards Sub-Committee is to deal with the determination of referred complaints from the Council's Monitoring Officer and any subsequent hearings that may be required.

The Interim Borough Solicitor reported that the Standards sub-committee will comprise five Oldham Borough Council Members and an Independent Person. If the matter relates to a Parish/Town Council Member, the Sub-Committee will include at least one Parish/Town Council Member.

The Standards Sub-Committee will be politically balanced and comprising two Labour Group members and one each from the Liberal Democrats, the Conservatives and the Oldham Group.

Resolved:  
That the Standards Committee confirms the composition of its Sub-Committee, as outlined above.

7           **REVIEW OF MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT MATTERS**

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Borough Solicitor that asked Members to note the current Member Code of Conduct and Arrangements for dealing with complaints under the Code, which was last reviewed in September 2024.



The main issues detailed, in the Interim Borough Solicitor's report included:

- a. Councillor Code of Conduct
- b. General principles of Councillor conduct
- c. Application of the Code of Conduct
- d. Standards of Councillor conduct

The Committee was advised that the Standards of Councillor conduct section sets out the obligations of Members, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of a Councillor. Should the conduct of a Member fall short of the reported standards, a complaint may be made against that Member, which may ultimately result in action being taken. Guidance was included, in the report, to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

The Committee considered the report in detail and raised the following questions and queries:

1. The Committee requested that there should be mandatory training that occurs twice a year regarding the members code of conduct.
2. The Committee requested that training should be something more interactive than on previous occasions for example scenarios or a type of workshop setting.
3. There also needs to be something which demonstrates members actions and consequences, such as a report to be submitted to the Council highlighting members names who have allegedly breached the code. (with a naming/shaming consequence for any Member where a negative finding was reached)
4. The Committee agreed that there needed to be more transparency so for example they all agreed that members public website profile should evidence that the mandatory training has been completed, if the member doesn't engage, this should be publicised.
5. The Standards Committee requested something to be brought before a future meeting with details of members (names redacted) which evidences complaints that have been rejected, so that they could understand the type of complaints and any patterns.
6. The Standards Committee also requested if the 'Mayor's script', for Full Council meetings, could be amended to include specific wording that says all participants (i.e. all 60 Members of Oldham Borough Council) agree (at Council meetings) to abide by the Members Code of Conduct. This could then also link to a possible 'contract' that all members sign up to annually regarding the minimum standard of behaviour and confirmation of their acceptance of the Code of Conduct.

7. The Standards Committee agreed that the Code of Conduct should be amended to incorporate some of the agreed above points once they had been resolved at full Council, but they were all clear this did need to progress to a report at full Council for debate.

Resolved:

That the Standards Committee

1. Approves the report.
2. That the Mayor's Script for Council meetings be amended to include specific wording that says all participants (i.e. all 60 Members of Oldham Borough Council) agree (at Council meetings) to abide by the Members Code of Conduct. This could then also link to a possible 'contract' that all members sign up to annually regarding the minimum standard of behaviour and confirmation of their acceptance of the Code of Conduct.
3. That the Interim Borough Solicitor be requested to liaise with the Local Government Association to source suitable training for members on the Code of Conduct.

The meeting started at 6.00pm and ended at 6.35pm

This page is intentionally left blank

**Public Document Pack**  
**STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE**  
**11/11/2025 at 10.00 am**



**Present:** Councillor Byrne (Chair)  
Councillors Ghafoor, Harrison, Marland and Nasheen  
Mark Reynolds, Independent Person

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Louie Hamblett  
Councillor Mark Kenyon  
Councillor Dave Murphy  
Councillor Howard Sykes MBE  
Councillor Lisa Navesey (part of the meeting)  
Councillor Helen Bishop (part of the meeting)  
Alex Bougatef, Director of Legal (Monitoring Officer)  
Heather Moore, Assistant Director of Governance  
Matthew Lewin, Legal Adviser to the Sub-Committee  
Simon Goacher, Independent Investigator  
Richard Cole, Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors  
(representative of the four Subject Members)

1           **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Pam Byrne be appointed as Chair of the Sub-Committee.

2           **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

3           **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

4           **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

5           **ASSESSMENT OF STANDARDS COMPLAINTS**

In accordance with the procedures for dealing with Member Code of Conduct complaints, consideration was given to a report of the Monitoring Officer detailing allegations of misconduct against four Councillors namely Councillors Mark Kenyon, Howard Sykes, Louie Hamblett and David Murphy, which alleged that:

- Councillor Kenyon had secretly recorded a meeting between Councillor Shah and members of the Shaw Independents group which took place in the Leader's office on 20 May 2024.
- Councillors Sykes, Hamblett and Murphy were aware that Councillor Kenyon was making that recording.
- All four councillors leaked the recording to a third party who then shared the recording online.

The Sub-Committee received a written representation by a barrister acting for Councillor Sykes, which was considered as a preliminary issue at the beginning of the hearing. The written

representation outlined that it was not possible to find that a breach of the Code of Conduct had occurred in relation to Councillors Sykes, Hamblett and Murphy in respect of the allegation in the complaint. However, there had been a conclusion of a breach of the Code regarding the investigation process, and this should not be dealt with in the proceedings. The Sub-Committee also heard representations from Councillor Sykes' representative and the investigating officer. The Sub-Committee heard the views of the Independent Person who considered that the Sub-Committee had no jurisdiction to deal with the new complaints against Councillors Sykes, Hamblett and Murphy, as the new allegations had not been put in writing to them, as required by the law, in line with the independent legal advice provided at the meeting.

The Sub-Committee proceeded to consider the report of the external investigating officer appointed to investigate the complaint related to Councillor Kenyon and the allegations that Councillor Kenyon had breached paragraphs 4.1 (confidentiality and access to information), 5.1 (bringing the role or council into disrepute) and 7.1 (use of resources) of the Code.

The Sub-Committee heard representations from the investigating officer, Councillor Kenyon's representative and Cllr Kenyon.

The Sub-Committee heard the views of the Independent Person who considered that Councillor Kenyon had breached the Code and that appropriate sanctions would be for Councillor Kenyon to apologise, and for the matter to be reported to the full Council for noting.

All Members of the Sub-Committee requested that their individual vote be recorded on the following matters:

<b>That Councillor Kenyon had breached paragraph 7.1 of the Code (misuse of resources)</b>	
Byrne	Against
Ghafoor	Against
Harrison	For
Marland	Against
Nasheen	For

<b>That the findings of the Sub-Committee be reported to the full Council for information</b>	
Byrne	Against
Ghafoor	Against
Harrison	For
Marland	Against
Nasheen	For

<b>That Councillor Kenyon be recommended to provide a personal apology to Councillors Hince, Shah and Navesey</b>	
Byrne	For
Ghafoor	For
Harrison	For
Marland	For
Nasheen	For

<b>That the Group Leader be recommended to remove Councillor Kenyon from Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council</b>	
Byrne	Against
Ghafoor	Against
Harrison	For
Marland	Against
Nasheen	For

**RESOLVED** that the Sub-Committee finds that:

1. It had no jurisdiction to consider the new complaints regarding the alleged failure of Councillors Sykes, Hamblett and Murphy to co-operate with the investigation, in breach of paragraph 8.2 of the Code of Conduct, as the new allegations had not been made the subject of a formal written complaint and section 27(9) of the Localism Act 2011) requires an allegation to be made in writing before it can be dealt with under the Council's statutory arrangements for code of conduct complaints.

2. Councillor Kenyon had breached the Code of Conduct as he had disclosed confidential information in breach of paragraph 4.1 of the Code and that he had brought his role and the Council into disrepute in breach of paragraph 5.1 of the Code.

3. The following sanctions be applied:

- a. To make the findings of the Sub-Committee public.
- b. To recommend that Councillor Kenyon sends a personal apology to Councillors Shah, Hince and Navesey.

The meeting started at 10.15 am and ended at 3.45 pm

This page is intentionally left blank