

Broads Authority

09 May 2025

Agenda item number 16

Annual report of the Standards Committee

Report by Governance Officer

Purpose

To provide an overview of the work of the Standards Committee and information on complaints under the Members Code of Conduct.

Recommended decision

To note the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. In [September 2023](#) the Authority agreed to the establishment of a Standards Committee. Creation of this Committee was one of the recommendations of the report of Mark Heath, which the Authority accepted and approved at its meeting on [20 January 2023](#). The principal purpose of this Committee is the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct within the Authority. A key function of the Committee is to deal with complaints under the Code of Conduct. The Committee is scheduled to meet once per annum, with additional meetings convened as necessary.
- 1.2. The Localism Act 2011 requires all local authorities, including the Broads Authority and national park authorities, to have an adopted Code of Conduct for members and to have appropriate procedure in place for dealing with complaints made under the Code.
- 1.3. The Act states:

Section 27

- (1) A relevant authority must promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority.
- (2) In discharging its duty under subsection (1), a relevant authority must, in particular, adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity.

Section 28

- (6) A relevant authority other than a parish council must have in place—
 - (a) arrangements under which allegations can be investigated, and

- (b) arrangements under which decisions on allegations can be made.
- 1.4. The responsibility for all issues of probity and conduct must sit with either the Authority as a whole or a separately constituted committee. Most local authorities have adopted a separate Standards Committee
- 1.5. Under its terms of reference, the Committee is required to produce an annual report on its work to the Broads Authority.

2. Independent Persons

- 2.1. The Committee convened a meeting on [21 June 2024](#) to discuss the appointment of two Independent Persons to the Broads Authority. The Committee resolved unanimously to recommend that the Broads Authority appoint Charles Monteith and Hannah Brown as the Authority's Independent Persons. In [July 2024](#), the Authority agreed to appoint both Independent Persons with effect from 26 July 2024 for a period of four years.

3. Update

- 3.1. In July 2024, the following Members were appointed to the Committee: Stephen Bolt; Peter Dixon; Andrée Gee; Paul Hayden; Tim Jickells; Kevin Maguire (replaced by Gurpreet Padda in September 2024); and Michael Scott.
- 3.2. At its meeting on [20 February 2025](#), Stephen Bolt was appointed Chair and Tim Jickells Vice-Chair.
- 3.3. The Monitoring Officer (MO) presented on two items: [Consultation on Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England](#); and the [review of the Code of Conduct for Members](#).
- 3.4. The MO had set out draft answers to each question on the consultation and the Standards Committee discussed each question in full so that the Authority's response could be drafted and submitted.
- 3.5. A number of minor changes were proposed to the Code of Conduct for Members and these were either formatting, for clarification or to adapt the wording so it was relevant to the Broads Authority. The Standards Committee requested that Monitoring Officer review the wording for members' participation in the setting of tolls to make it clearer that any member who pays a toll by reason of owning a private boat, canoe, SUP etc can speak and vote on toll setting, and to allow Navigation Committee members who pay tolls, whether as private boat owners or commercial hire boat operators, to speak and vote at the consultation meeting with the Committee. At its meeting on [14 March 2025](#), the revised Code was adopted by the Broads Authority.

4. Complaints under the Code of Conduct

- 4.1. No complaints were made under the Code of Conduct during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

5. Future work programme

- 5.1. Following the consultation on strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England, the Standards Committee will be looking at the revised legislation together with the suggested national code of conduct to be decided by government in due course.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. Members are asked to note the work undertaken by the Standards Committee.

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Background papers: none

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: n/a