

Parish Council Member of Joint Standards Committee

Role Description

1. The Joint Standards Committee is a joint committee of the City Council and up to three Parish Councils in York (currently Heworth Without and Earswick Councils).
2. Parish Council Members' appointments to the Joint Standards Committee must be supported by their own Council (which will need to pass a resolution agreeing to the establishment of the Joint Committee). The City Council must also agree to the establishment to the Joint Committee and, in practice, therefore also approves the individual appointment. However, the role is to represent the voice of Parish Councillors generally and to act as an ambassador for the standards system within Parish Fora. For that reason nominations are sought through the Yorkshire Local Councils' Association.
3. The Joint Standards committee meets up to six times a year. Meetings take place in the afternoons at West Offices. Parish Council Members are expected be able to commit to a high level of attendance at these meetings.
4. All Members of the Standards Committee have a responsibility for:
 - promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted members;
 - assisting Councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
 - advising the City and Parish Councils on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;
 - monitoring the operation of Codes of Conduct;
5. Parish Council Members may be invited to sit on Sub Committees considering what action to take in respect of complaints made against either other Parish or City Councillors. On average such invitations are likely to be made less than once a year. These Sub Committee meetings are held either:

- To determine whether a complaint about a councillor should be investigated - where the Monitoring Officer has decided not to make that decision himself.
- Following an investigation, to determine whether a Member has breached the code of conduct and to determine what sanction, if any, to impose.

Key Attributes of a Standards Committee Member

1. Members should have a keen interest in promoting high ethical standards in local government and particularly in Parish Councils within York.
2. Members must have and be prepared to develop their understanding of the principles behind the Members' Code of Conduct.
3. Members must command confidence in their impartiality and integrity from other Councillors and from the general public. If a Member has had a recent complaint upheld against them it will not be an absolute bar to them remaining or becoming a member of the Joint Standards Committee but will be a factor in considering whether they are likely to command confidence.
4. Members must be able to analyse, interpret and absorb information and evidence effectively and quickly and to approach decision making in an open handed manner.