

Bolsover District Council

Customer Service & Transformation Scrutiny Committee

23rd July 2018

Review of Standards Committee – Operational Review

Report of the Scrutiny & Elections Officer

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To brief Members of Committee on the work undertaken by Standards Committee and the background to the request for a review by Scrutiny.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 As part of the Committee's Work programme for 2018/19, the Standards Committee has requested an Operational Review, to ensure we are operating in a best practice manner.
- 1.2 The request for Review is as a result of the enquiry at a national level by the Parliamentary Committee on Standards in Public Life.
- 1.3 Attached to this report are a number of documents by way of background information which will hopefully support Members as part of the scoping process
 - Appendix 1: BDC response to the survey by the Parliamentary Committee.
 - Appendix 2: Suggested lines of questioning for inclusion in the scope.
 - Appendix 3: A summary of the discussion on 18th April 2018 (Parliamentary Committee)
 - Appendix 4: A transcript of the session in 24th April (Parliamentary Committee)
- 1.4 For the most part, our Standards Committee concludes that Members do operate in an appropriate manner (see Appendix 1). Nevertheless, they welcome an external viewpoint via scrutiny to ensure our approach remains robust.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 Members agreed to take on this piece of work as part of their meeting in May 2018 where they set their work programme for 2018/19.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 Standards Committee have suggested a range of lines of enquiry some of which will involve consultation both externally and internally. However, at this stage the formal scope of the review has not been agreed. Members of the Scrutiny Committee should consider the options for consultation as part of the review.
- 3.2 The Council has a statutory duty under s.149 Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination.
- 3.3 As part of the scoping of Reviews, consideration is given to any consultation that could support the evidence gathering process.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 There is no option to reject the report as Part 3.6(2) of the Council's Constitution requires each Scrutiny Committee to set an annual work plan. The Scrutiny Committee has agreed to undertake this piece of work as part of their Work Programme 2018/19.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

- 5.1.1 Non-compliance with the Code of Conduct could lead to a reputational risk, as Members would not be operating to the high standards expected of them.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

- 5.2.1 In carrying out scrutiny reviews the Council is exercising its scrutiny powers as laid out in s.21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent legislation which added to/amended these powers e.g. the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

- 5.3.1 None from this report.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Members note the information in the report as part of the scoping process.
- 6.2 That Members agree the scope of the review and commence gathering evidence.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: <i>BDC: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/></i> <i>Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/></i> <i>NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000 <input type="checkbox"/></i> <i>Capital - £250,000 <input type="checkbox"/></i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
Has the relevant Portfolio Holder been informed	Yes
District Wards Affected	All
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	All

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1.	Response to the Review of Local Government Standards by Parliamentary Committee on Standards in Public Life
2.	Suggested lines of questioning for consideration by Committee.
3.	Summary note of 18 April 2018 roundtable
4.	24 April roundtable transcript
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author	Contact Number
Joanne Wilson, Scrutiny & Elections Officer	Ext. 2385