



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	<b>AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 22 MAY 2024</b>
Subject	<b>APPOINTMENT OF STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE</b>
Wards affected	None
Accountable member	Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee
Accountable officer	Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager (Interim Monitoring Officer) Email: <a href="mailto:Andrew.Brown@publicagroup.uk">Andrew.Brown@publicagroup.uk</a>
Report author	Andrew Brown, Democratic Services Business Manager (Interim Monitoring Officer) Email: <a href="mailto:Andrew.Brown@publicagroup.uk">Andrew.Brown@publicagroup.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To invite the Audit and Governance Committee to appoint a Standards Sub-Committee for the 2024/25 civic year.
Annexes	A. Nominated Members (to follow)
Recommendation(s)	That the Audit and Governance Committee resolves to:  I. Appoint five members of the Audit and Governance Committee to the Standards Sub-Committee in accordance with political proportionality and the wishes of political groups as set out in Annex A (2 Liberal Democrat, 1 Conservative, 1 Labour, 1 Green).
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Working Together for West Oxfordshire</li></ul>
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Political groups that are entitled to seats on the sub-committee have been asked to nominate members.

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council’s Constitution provides that the Audit and Governance Committee will appoint a Standards Sub-Committee.
- 1.2 The power to appoint members to sub-committees lies with the “parent” committee i.e. the Audit and Governance Committee.

## 2. STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE

- 2.1 The Standards Sub-Committee is responsible for determining, in conjunction with an Independent Person, allegations that Members of the Council, and Members of Town and Parish Councils where West Oxfordshire District Council is the Principal Authority, have failed to comply with their Code of Conduct for Members. The Sub-Committee will determine any allegation of a breach of the code of conduct referred to it by the Monitoring Officer. Where appropriate, the Sub-Committee may impose sanctions upon Members of West Oxfordshire District Council, and may recommend sanctions to the relevant Town or Parish Council in respect of their Members.
- 2.2 The provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 relating to sub-committees apply to the Standards Sub-Committee, meaning the membership must be appointed for a specified period of time (usually the duration of a municipal year), in accordance with political proportionality. Members of the Sub-Committee must be members of the Audit and Governance Committee and must have undertaken standards training prior to participating in any hearing to determine a code of conduct complaint.
- 2.3 It is proposed that the Audit and Governance Committee appoints five members of the Audit and Governance Committee (as in previous years) to the Standards Sub-Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year, in accordance with political proportionality, as set out in Table I below.

**Table I: Political proportionality on a five member Sub-Committee**

Group	Liberal Democrat	Conservative	Labour	Green	Total
Real entitlement	2.14	1.33	1.12	.41	5
Rounded entitlement	2	1	1	0	4
Seats allocated	2	1	1	0	5

**2.4** The standards sub-committees has one seat vacant after all groups have received their full proportional entitlement of seats. Of the four political groups, the Green Group has the strongest proportional entitlement to the unallocated seat (0.41), higher than the Conservative Group (0.33), the Liberal Democrat Group (0.14) and the Labour and Co-Operative Group (0.12). The Green Group therefore gains the final seat.

### **3. SUBSTITUTIONS**

**3.1** The Constitution provides that all Members of each political group not appointed to a particular Sub-Committee, shall be named as substitute Members for the Member(s) of that group who have been appointed to that Sub-Committee, subject to provision that substitute Members for Sub-Committees are restricted to Members of the 'parent' Committee.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** The legal issues relating to the appointment of sub-committees are detailed in the body of the report.

### **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

**6.1** Appointing a sub-committees in accordance with the provisions of the law and the Constitution will help to ensure that code of conduct complaints that progress to a hearing can be determined in a timely fashion.

### **7. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

**7.1** The Committee is advised to have due regard to the need to promote equality when appointing Sub-Committees with responsibility for determining code of conduct complaints.

### **8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

**8.1** There are no climate or ecological implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

### **9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

**9.1** If the Audit and Governance Committee wishes to change the size of the Standards Sub-Committee it could pass a resolution requesting that officers bring a report to a future meeting with alternative proposals.

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**10.1** None

(END)