

MEETING: 21 MARCH 2011

**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON
STANDARDS ISSUES**

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CLERK

1. Introduction

This is the third annual report to have been prepared on the work of the Committee, on standards matters.

In previous years, the report has been used to complete the annual return questionnaire issued by Standards for England. Whilst there is no longer a requirement to submit a return, the report has been prepared for Members' information.

2. Membership

The Committee is comprised as follows:-

6 Members (Councillors Bell, Clark, Haley, M. Forbes, Charlton and Woodwark).

3 Independent Members (Mr. G.N. Cook – Chairman,
Mr. J.P. Paterson – Vice Chairman and Miss G. Goodwill).

3. The role of the Standards Committee

The main purpose of the Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members, including Co-optees. The detailed terms of reference are set out in the Authority's Constitution.

4. Meetings

The full Committee will have held 3 meetings during the course of the year.

5. Matters Considered

Like other Fire and Rescue Authorities with relatively small membership, there have been no matters of concern raised or hearings held in the last year.

The Committee has considered a report on the Government's proposal to overhaul the Standards regime and a further update is included on

this agenda. Elsewhere on this agenda there is also a report regarding the endorsement of a Partnership Behaviour Protocol.

6. Local Assessments

There have been no local assessments. However, four Members of the Committee have general experience of these through their role on Sunderland City Council's Standards Committee.

7. Register of Interests

In the interests of transparency, the register of interests continues to be available to be accessed electronically on the Authority's website.

Members are sent a copy of their interests during the course of the year to check that their entries are up to date.

8. Conclusion

The Committee is requested to note the report.