

<b>Recommendation to Council on 29 January 2015</b>	<b>From: General Purposes Committee on 15 January 2015</b>	<b>Item 10(ii)</b>
	<b>Councillor Code of Conduct Complaints</b>	
1.	Council is asked to approve the following recommendation:-	
	<b>that the proposed amendments to Part F2 of the Constitution, as set out at Appendix A(i), and to the Councillor Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure Flowchart, as set out at Appendix A(ii), be approved and adopted.</b>	
	<b>Background</b>	
2.	The General Purposes Committee considered a report by the Chief Legal and Democratic Services Officer and Monitoring Officer which introduced a report, originally submitted to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 December 2014, on proposed changes to the councillor Code of Conduct complaints processes and procedures. Members also had before them a copy of the slide pack for the accompanying presentation given to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In addition, the Chief Legal and Democratic Services Officer and Monitoring Officer took the opportunity to verbally update the summary of Councillor Code of Conduct complaints to include the figures for December 2014.	
3.	The General Purposes Committee noted that the report presented to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee had arisen as a consequence of concerns over the time and cost resource implications to the Council with regard to the processing of town and parish councillor Code of Conduct complaints. The report explained the current arrangements and the range of issues which had generated the resource challenges. It was in response to this situation that the Chief Legal and Democratic Services Officer and Monitoring Officer sought changes to Part F2 of the Constitution ('Arrangements for dealing with Standards Allegations Under the Localism Act 2011') with the aim of improving the management of the complaints process and the turnaround times in respect of complaints and generally streamlining the process in the light of experience whilst ensuring that the relevant checks and balances remained. An emphasis on securing the local resolution of complaints, if at all possible, was made by the Chief Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer.	
4.	The views of the General Purposes Committee on the proposed changes to the Constitution were sought. During the debate the Chief Legal and Democratic Services Officer and Monitoring Officer stated that she would welcome the clear endorsement and ownership by all	

	<p>members of the Council of the proposed, wider, changes to the Constitution. Following full consideration the General Purposes Committee concurred with the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee's proposed changes. In addition, Members approved the related Councillor Code of Conduct Complaint Procedure Flowchart, which provided a guide in pictorial form, subject to a revision to embolden the typeface of the timescales. Following further comment the Chief Legal and Democratic Services Officer and Monitoring Officer undertook to further examine the content of the Flowchart to ensure greater clarity and achieve conformity with any changes to the Constitution that were subsequently approved by Council.</p>	
5.	<p>The General Purposes Committee considered the need to improve awareness of Code of Conduct complaints issues among town and parish councils having regard to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendation that a dedicated seminar be held for this purpose. The General Purposes Committee noted that a development seminar was now scheduled to be held on 19 March 2015 for town and parish council clerks with the aim of embedding awareness on this issue within the councils. It was further noted that a second development seminar would be held for town and parish councillors following the elections on 7 May. Members indicated their full support for these arrangements.</p>	
<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix A	Report to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 16 December 2014
	Appendix A(i)	Tracked changes between the existing and proposed 'Arrangements for Dealing with Standards Allegations under the Localism Act 2011' (Part F2 of the Constitution).
	Appendix A(ii)	Amended Councillor Code of Conduct Complaint Procedure Flowchart
	Appendix B	Amended Summary – Councillor Code of Conduct Complaints