

Council Meeting – 8 December 2020

REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

* Mr David Harmer (Chairman)
 * Mr Keith Witham (Vice Chairman)
 * Dr Peter Szanto
 * Mrs Victoria Young
 * Mr Stephen Cooksey
 A Mr Stephen Spence
 S Mr Ernest Mallett

* = Present
 A = Apologies
 S = Substitute

REPORT OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT WORKING GROUP

1. At its meeting on 22 May 2020, the Audit and Governance Committee considered the Ethical Standards Annual Report and agreed to establish a working group to review possible changes to the Member Code of Conduct.
2. The Surrey County Council Arrangements for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches of the Member Code of Conduct currently make provision for the appointment by Council of at least one Independent Person, whose views must be sought by the Council before it takes a decision on any allegation which it has decided should be investigated.

In line with the proposal by the Committee for Standards in Public Life, the committee recommends that SCC appoint two Independent Persons. Details are attached at Appendix A.

3. The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to adopt arrangements for dealing with complaints of a breach of the Member Code of Conduct. The committee considered proposed amendments to the current SCC Arrangements for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches of the Member Code of Conduct, and a revised version is attached at Appendix B.
4. Council is asked to **approve** the following recommendations by the Audit and Governance Committee:
 - (1) (a) The appointment of two Independent Persons.
 (b) That Mr Akbar Khan and Philippa Harding be appointed as the two Independent Persons.
 - (2) The revised Arrangements for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches of the Member Code of Conduct.

Mr David Harmer
Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee
26 November 2020