



South Tyneside Council

item 8

Work Programme 2026/27

**This document has been classified as:
Not Protectively Marked**

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Standards Committee 6 July 2026

Report to Standards Committee

Cabinet Portfolio/Lead Member: Councillor Susan Sybenga, Finance and Resources

Report of Lucy Keating, Director of Legal and Governance

Subject: Work Programme 2026/27

Date: 6 July 2026

Wards affected: All

Council ambitions: The report will set out future items for Committee meetings potentially relating to all five Council ambitions.

Does the report and any appendices contain information which has been identified as confidential or exempt?

- No, this report does not contain information identified as confidential or exempt.

Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny? No

Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Council's Constitution requires each Committee or Panel to be responsible for setting its own Work Programme.
- 1.2 There is no requirement for the Standards Committee to have a work programme. However, it is considered good practice to have one as it helps demonstrate the work done by the Committee in promoting and maintaining high standards of ethical conduct throughout the year.
- 1.3 It is essential that the Committee's Work Programme is linked to specific corporate priority themes, and, in each case, the methodology used to prioritise the items should be clearly identifiable.

Background Information

- 2.1 The appended proposed work programme has been developed based on discussions at past Standards Committee meetings which identified service areas and topics appropriate for further review.
- 2.2 It is intended that the Work Programme will develop in such a way that Members' views are incorporated into it at all stages. This ensures that the Committee's Work Programme reflects Members' priorities and adheres to the principle of a "Member led" approach.
- 2.3 The terms of reference of the Standards Committee are set out in Article 12 of the Constitution.
- 2.4 The Committee is responsible for:
 - a. the promotion and maintenance of high ethical standards within the Council;
 - b. helping to secure adherence to the Members' Code of Conduct;
 - c. monitoring the operation of the Code within South Tyneside;
 - d. promoting and reviewing a Whistleblowing Policy for Members;
 - e. if a complaint is referred to the Standards Committee for a decision on whether to investigate, making a decision as to whether an allegation should be investigated and, if so, instructing the Monitoring Officer to appoint an Investigating Officer to conduct an investigation and produce a report thereon;
 - f. considering the Final Report of the Investigating Officer with regards a complaint against an Elected Member and deciding whether or not to accept the Investigating Officer's finding (if the finding is that the Member has not failed to comply with the Code of Conduct) or deciding that the matter should be considered at a hearing of the Standards Committee;

- g. conducting hearings following investigation in accordance with Annex C (including following requests for review) and deciding whether or not there has been a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct where the Investigating Officers report concludes that there has been a failure by the Member to comply with the Code of Conduct for Members; and
 - h. deciding upon appropriate sanctions and penalties where a Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and making the necessary recommendations to Full Council with regards those sanctions, if appropriate.
- 2.5 A draft work programme for the Committee for 2026/27 is attached at Appendix 1 for consideration. It is designed to assist the Committee to meet its objectives set out in the Terms of Reference above and to ensure that the Council complies with its obligations under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst elected and co-opted Members.
- 2.6 There continues to be standing items for each meeting in relation to local and national code of conduct issues. The work programme is intended to be flexible and can cover additional areas which the Committee is particularly concerned about, as they arise.

Main issues and Options to be Considered

- 3.0 The report seeks suggestions for items for future consideration by the Committee.

Implications

Financial and Resources

- 4.0 There are no known financial or resource implications arising from this report at this time.

Legal and Governance

- 5.0 The Council has a duty under s. 27 of the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its members and to adopt a code of conduct that is consistent with the Nolan Principles. It is anticipated that a planned work programme to deal with the specific roles and functions of the Committee, as set out in the Constitution, will assist compliance with this duty.

Risk

6.0 As this report is presented for information and not for any direct decision-making, there are no risks attached to it.

Equality and Diversity and Community

7.0 There are no known equality and diversity and community risks at this time.

Environmental and Sustainability

8.0 There are no known environmental or sustainability implications from this report at this time.

Council Ambitions, Policies, Strategies and Plans

9.0 As set out above, this report suggests items for consideration at future meetings and could therefore relate to all five council ambitions.

Consultation and Engagement

10.0 There is no requirement to consult the public on this report.

Recommendations

11.0 Members are invited to review the issues identified and make any amendments or additions deemed necessary for the draft work programme for 2026/27.

Reasons for Recommendations

12.0 To ensure the Committee has a varied work programme for 2026/27, to support the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by its Members. The work programme will ensure the roles and functions of the Committee, as set out in the Constitution, are fulfilled.

List of Appendices

1. Work Programme Table