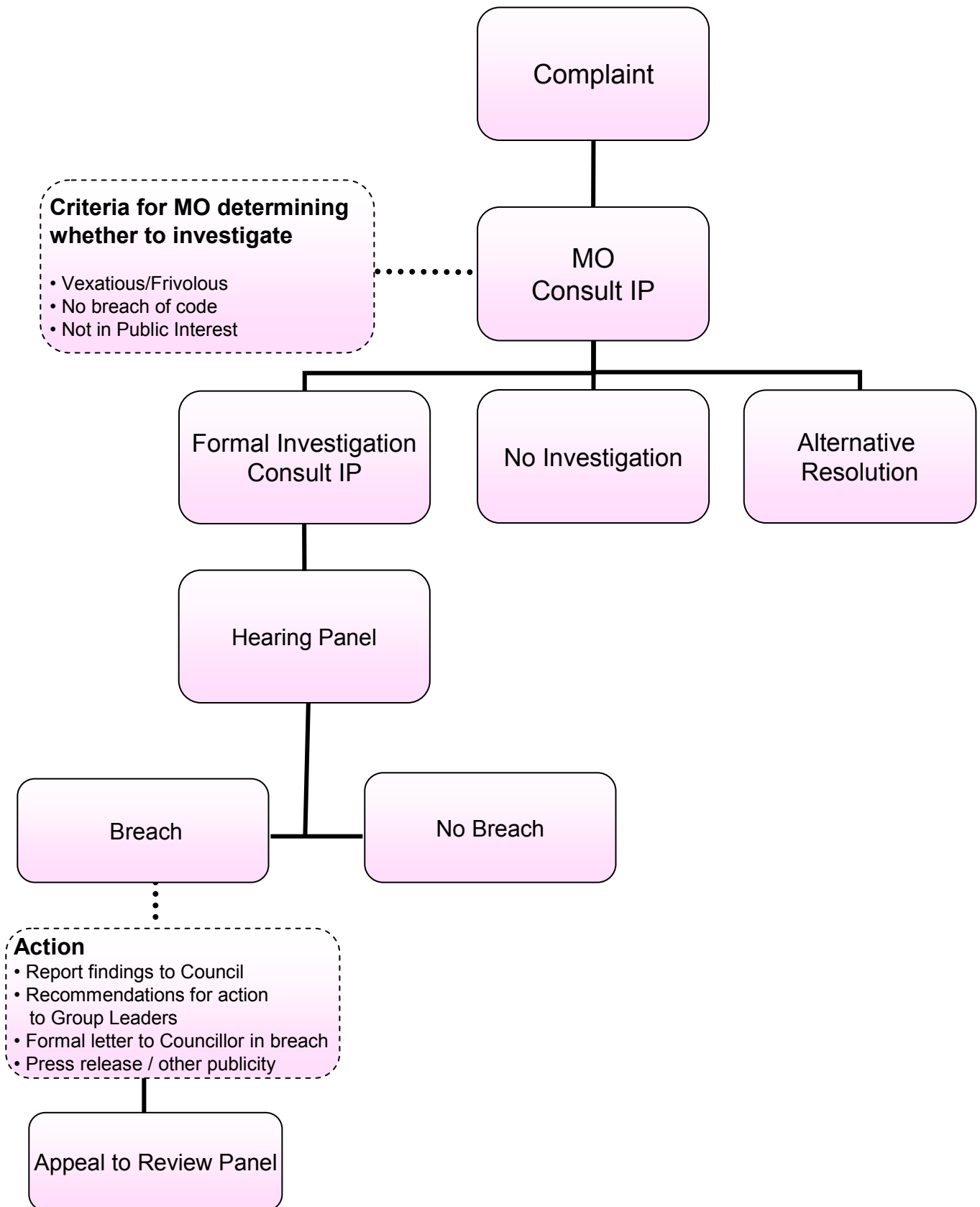


Draft Standards Complaints Procedure



GENERAL PRINCIPLES REGARDING THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Any complaints submitted shall be investigated and dealt with having regard to the following principles:

- All complaints shall be dealt with as speedily as is reasonably practicable and, in any case, within a maximum of three months;
- The complaints shall be dealt with having regard to the need to uphold high standards of conduct among members as well as enhancing public confidence in the authority and the office of Councillors;
- In considering whether to investigate a complaint, the Monitoring Officer shall consult the Independent Person/s and may consult the Chair and the Audit and Standards Committee;
- The complaint will be put to the Member complained of to ensure that all relevant information obtained;
- Any action or sanction imposed by the Hearing Panel shall be proportionate;
- The Hearing Panel and any Review (Appeal) Panel will be held in public;
- All Members, co-opted Members and Political Groups within the Council shall co-operate in facilitating any investigations and in actioning any sanctions or recommendation of the Hearing Panel;
- All complaints received and a summary of the findings shall be reported to the Audit and Standards Committee in part II or, if the findings have been published, in Part I;
- The Monitoring Officer may issue such guidance, advisory or procedural notes regarding the operation of the complaints process as he considers appropriate.