

APPENDIX 1

WORK PROGRAMME FOR STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Role and Functions of the Standards Committee derive from primary and secondary legislation and the Council's Constitution. The Work Programme for the Standards committee must therefore link to these roles and functions.

Statutory Authority

The Council is required to operate a Standards Committee pursuant to s53 of the Local Government Act 2000. These requirements are expanded within the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008. The legislation sets out the general functions of a Standards Committee as being:

- (a) promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by the members and co-opted members of the authority, and
- (b) assisting members and co-opted members of the authority to observe the authority's code of conduct.
- (c) advising the authority on the adoption or revision of a code of conduct,
- (d) monitoring the operation of the authority's code of conduct, and
- (e) advising, training or arranging to train members and co-opted members of the authority on matters relating to the authority's code of conduct.

The Act states that the Council may arrange for their standards committee to exercise such other functions as it considers appropriate.

Council's Constitution

The Council's Constitution outlines the roles and functions of the Standards committee. These roles and functions are;

- a) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors and co-opted Members;
- b) Assisting the Councillors and co-opted Members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct, as contained within Part 5 of this Constitution;
- c) Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Code of Conduct for Councillors;
- d) Monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct for Councillors;
- e) Advising, training or arranging to train Councillors and co-opted Members on matters relating to the Code of Conduct for Councillors;

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- f) Granting dispensations to Councillors and co-opted Members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Code of Conduct for Councillors;
- g) Dealing with any reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal and any report from the Monitoring Officer on any matter which is referred by an Ethical Standards Officer to the Monitoring Officer;
- h) The exercise of paragraphs (a) to (g) above in relation to the Parish Councils wholly within the District of North Hertfordshire and the members of those Parish Councils;
- i) To determine local initial assessments into allegations of misconduct by local district and parish councillors etc., by way of a system of Assessment, Review and Hearing Sub-Committees.
- k) To provide advice and guidance to Councillors and co-opted Members and to make arrangements for training on any matter within these Terms of Reference.
- l) To deal with applications for exemption from political restriction or to consider whether to include a post within the list of politically restricted posts.

Additional Roles of the Standards Committee

- a) Submission of recommendations to the Council on Codes and protocols;
- b) Oversight of the Register of Members' Interests;
- c) Overview of the Whistle Blowing Policy;
- d) Overview of complaints handling and Ombudsman investigations.

The Monitoring Officer is required to contribute to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct through the provision of support to the Standards Committee.

This work programme for the Standards Committee has previously comprised:

- o Table of regular agenda items which will be brought to the Committee annually
- o Table of ongoing work subject to review at each Committee meeting

This has been simplified in this version, due in part to the nature of the work being undertaken.

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CALENDAR OF ITEMS FOR THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

| Timescale | Work Action | Comments/Updated Position |
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| Ongoing throughout the year | <p>Ongoing updating to Council as necessary / liaison between Members and the Chair of Standards Committee</p> <p>Training for: Standards Committee Members District Council Members Parish and Town Councils</p> <p>Code of Conduct Complaint Handling (Assessment Sub Committee, Review Sub Committee etc)</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Code of Conduct training for Parish Council Members and District Council members was delivered by the Monitoring Officer and supported by the Chair of the Standards Committee on 3rd, 4th and 23rd August 2011. Future training is considered further below.</p> <p>Ongoing. Update under Appendix 2 (Part 2)</p> |
| March- July 2012 | <p>New Declarations of Office and Registers of Interest to be received within 28 days.</p> <p>Detailed Review and consideration of the impact of the Localism Act on the Standards regime.</p> <p>Consideration of the Member/Officer Working Protocol and the Planning Code of Good Practice</p> <p>Training on Changes to Standards Framework for District and Parish Council Members</p> | <p>Monitoring will be commenced following the elections in May 2012.</p> <p>The Standards Committee have a detailed Report on this item. It is intended that full Council will consider the Report at the Annual Council meeting.</p> <p>This is to consider any updates or changes needed to the Protocol or Code of Good Practice as a result of the Localism Act, and will therefore be linked to the timescales for the changes to the Standards regime.</p> <p>Training needs to be delivered to District Council and Parish Council members prior to the implementation of the new Standards regime.</p> |

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| <p>August – December 2012</p> | <p>Implementation of the new Standards regime</p> <p>Ongoing training on the newly implemented Standards Framework</p> <p>Constitution Review 2012/13</p> | <p>Need and demand for additional training will need to be monitored and kept under review following the implementation of the new Standards regime.</p> <p>Work to be commenced for the new Constitution Review.</p> |
| <p>December 2012 – March 2013</p> | <p>MO to work with Audit Manager to produce protocols for processing of confidential reports under Confidential Reporting Policy</p> | <p>It was agreed to allow time for the new Shared Internal Audit Service to be established. The Monitoring Officer has been focused on other pressing standards workload including the Localism Act and Code of Conduct Complaint Handling. Work on the protocols will follow in due course, but is currently a low priority due to the lack of use of the relevant Policy. However the proposed amended timescales will be kept under review.</p> |