

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Date of meeting: 8 July 2008
Report of: The Governance Group
Title: Role, Responsibilities and Work Programme of the Standards Committee

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on its role and function and those matters it must deal with leading up to 1 April 2009.

2. Decision Required

- (a) To note the Committee's terms of reference.
- (b) To note its role up to 1 April 2009 in respect of Parish Councils.
- (c) To adopt the work programme for the year 2008/2009.

3. Introduction

- 3.1 Cheshire East Shadow Authority is required to establish a Standards Committee under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000.
- 3.2 The Standards Committee's terms of reference as approved by the Shadow Council on 13 May are set out in Appendix A to this report.
- 3.3 The role of the Committee can be summarised as being responsible for promoting high standards of conduct in Cheshire East and, after 1 April 2009, the 102 Parish Council's in the then Council's area, and dealing with any allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- 3.4 In respect of Parish Councils, the three current Borough Councils will be responsible for Parish matters up to 1 April 2009. This Committee needs to prepare for taking over these responsibilities. A list of the 102 Parish Councils is appended to this report at Appendix B for information. Whilst Parish Meetings are not covered by the Code of Conduct, the five in Macclesfield Borough are noted for information at the end of the list.
- 3.5 The most important task for the Committee at this stage of its work is to recruit Independent and Parish Council representatives.
- 3.6 The legislation requires:-

- (a) the committee to be chaired by an Independent (i.e. a non- Shadow or Parish Councillor)
- (b) to have at least 25% Independent membership
- (c) to have Parish Council representation whenever the Committee deals with Parish Council matters.

- 3.7 A subsequent report on this agenda deals with the recruitment of Independents and Parish Council representatives.
- 3.8 In order to assist the committee in planning its work over the next 9 months, a draft work programme will be circulated at the meeting.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications.

5. Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond

- 5.1 The Committee will need to identify its budgeting needs for the year 2009/2010 in order for this to be considered as part of the Council's budgetary process.

6. Legal Implications

These are in the main body of the report.

7. Risk Assessment

By addressing its terms of reference, the Committee deals with its legal responsibilities and so manages the risks involved.

8. Overview of Day One, Year One and Term One Issues

It is important that the Committee is fully prepared to deal with all Standards issues by 1 April 2009. This will be done by having a fully constituted committee that is trained in its various roles.

The Committee needs to be able to deal with Shadow Authority issues as soon as possible.

For further information:

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Background Documents:

N/A