

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 24th May 2010

Report of: Monitoring Officer

Subject: Work Programme 2010-2011

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report invites the Standards Committee to agree a work programme for 2010-2011.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the work programme for 2010-2011 be approved.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The role of the Standards Committee is set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution, and a work programme will assist the Committee to meet its obligations in a timely manner.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 The work of the Standards Committee contributes to the Annual Governance Statement of the Council. The Standards Committee's work programme will help to support the Council's system of internal controls.

7.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond

- 7.1 None identified.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Standards Committee discharges the Council's functions under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent regulations. The roles and responsibilities of Standards Committees are set out in the Local Assessment Framework Guidance.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The Council has identified complaints under the Local Assessment Framework as a significant risk. Through its work programme, the Committee is asked to identify actions and projects which will encourage high levels of conduct and reduce the likelihood of complaints being made.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The function of the Standards Committee is set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution. The remit of the Committee comprises the following -

- Assessment of new complaints (discharge of any functions under S57A of the Act)
- Reviewing decisions to take no action over a complaint (S57B of the Act)
- Consider final investigation reports and conduct determination hearings.
- Considering and granting, or otherwise, dispensations in respect of Members' Interests when so enabled under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000;
- Promoting high standards of ethical behaviour by developing, maintaining and monitoring codes of Conduct for Members of the Council (including Co-opted Members and other persons acting in a similar capacity) and for employees in accordance with best practice and Government guidance;
- Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Codes of Conduct for Members and Officers;
- Ensuring that Members receive advice and training as appropriate on the Members' Code of Conduct;
- Issuing advice to Members on the treatment of personal interests and on conduct matters generally;

- Ensuring that the Council maintains appropriate links with the Standards Board for England and the Commission for Local Administration in England (Ombudsman);
- Referring issues, which impinge on staff conduct, performance, terms of employment, training and development to the appropriate and responsible Executive Member and/or Manager;
- Promoting high standards of responsiveness by the Council to its clients and contacts
- Advising other persons/bodies on probity and ethics as appropriate, particularly where that person or body is exercising functions on behalf of the Council;
- Supporting the Council's statutory officers as appropriate or their authorised deputies, in the performance of their duties;
- The local determination of complaints following any allegations of misconduct by Members;
- The determination of applications for exemption in respect of politically restricted posts.

10.2 To ensure that the Standards Committee is fulfilling its functions as set out in the Constitution, the Committee is asked to develop a work programme designed around its responsibilities.

10.3 The Monitoring Officer is required to report annually on the delivery of the ethical framework to Standards for England; this includes the following areas –

- Communication – publicising information about the work of the Committee
- Influence – promoting standards issues with senior figures within and external to the Council
- Training and Support – assessing training needs of Members
- Investigations
- Relationships with Parish and Town Councils

The Committee may wish to consider one or more of these themes as part of its work programme.

10.4 A draft containing suggestions for items to be included is attached as an appendix for consideration by the Committee.

11.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

11.1 None identified.

12.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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APPENDIX

WORK PROGRAMME – 2010- 2011

Month	Item
May 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report on Partnerships Protocol• Training requirements (standing item)• Work Programme 2010/2011
July 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring compliance with the Code of Conduct (monthly report on the number and types of complaints which have been referred).• Progress report on Partnerships Protocol• Training requirements (standing item) — to give consideration to the arrangement of training sessions on the Code of Conduct for Borough, Parish and Town Councillors. This will be dependent on Communities and Local Government (CLG) having published the revised Code.• Local Government Ombudsman complaints – these are published at the end of the June
September 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring compliance with the Code of Conduct (monthly report on the number and types of complaints which have been referred).• Training requirements (standing item)• Raising awareness: to review publicity for the role of the Standards Committee.• Review of Register of Interests. Committee to receive a report twice yearly on the outcome of a review of the Register of Interests.
November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring compliance with the Code of Conduct (monthly report on the number and types of complaints which have been referred).• Training requirements (standing item)• Feedback from the Annual Assembly of Standards Committees• Promoting high standards of ethical behaviour – the role of political groups
January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring compliance with the Code of Conduct (monthly report on the number and types of complaints which have been referred).• Training requirements (standing item)• Chairman's Annual Report for confirmation before submission to full Council

Month	Item
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town and Parish Councils: Feedback from the annual conference (Autumn 2010) in respect of any Code of Conduct issues raised by Clerks or Chairmen. • Annual Review of Whistle-blowing Procedure and "Dignity at Work" policy
March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring compliance with the Code of Conduct (monthly report on the number and types of complaints which have been referred). Finalised Chairman's Annual Report 2010/2011 • Training requirements (standing item) • Finalise Work Programme 20111-201209/2010 • Review of Register of Interests. Committee to receive a report twice yearly on the outcome of a review of the Register of Interests.
May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring compliance with the Code of Conduct (monthly report on the number and types of complaints which have been referred). • Training requirements (standing item)