



Standards Board– 14 March 2012

Activity Report of the Monitoring Officer

Purpose of report:

This report provides a brief update on current Monitoring Officer activity and ethical matters as requested by the board for each meeting.

1. Parish and Town Activity

- 1.1 Since the board met on 1 February 2012, 4 enquiries have been recorded from parish and town clerks and councillors, district councillors and the general public, mainly seeking advice on personal and prejudicial interests.
- 1.2 Changes to the town and parish council registers of interest continue as vacancies arise and are filled. There are currently 37 vacancies around the district.
- 1.3 At the time of writing this report there were 25 outstanding Register of Interest forms for Parish Councillors. The appropriate Parish Clerks had been contacted to remind those Councillors to return the forms to the Monitoring Officer.

2 Complaints

- 2.1 The level of complaints-related activity shows no sign of reducing. Since the last meeting one further complaint and one request for a review of an Assessment Sub-Committee decision have been received. The Assessment Sub-Committee for the complaint is planned for the same day as this meeting and the Review Committee meeting is being organised.
- 2.2 The Transitional Arrangement Regulations to be published by the DCLG for the new standards regimen are thought to include provisions for enabling complaints under the old code to be determined under the new arrangements after 1 July 2012. This would avoid the unfortunate potential position of breaches under the current code being unable to be dealt with under the new arrangements due to lack of time.

3 Training

- 3.1 On 27 February 2012, 41 people representing 20 of the Town and Parish Councils attended a workshop on the proposed changes to the standards regimen following the Localism Act. Their comments have been incorporated into the Future of Standards report also on this agenda.
- 3.2 Training for ENC councillors on the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty in relation to councils and services provided on their behalf has been organised for 2 April 2012. This is aimed at understanding the risks to the Council in relation to reputation and finance (for example costs arising from potential legal challenges) and to ensure the decision-making process is compliant with equality legislation.

Legal	Power: Local Government Act 2000 and Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007				
	Other considerations: Localism Act 2011				
Background Papers: None					
Person Originating Report: Sharn Matthews, Monitoring Officer, 01832 742108, smatthews@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk					
Date: 5 March 2012					
CFO		MO		CX	

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