



# East Northamptonshire Council

## Standards Board - 3 February 2010

### Activity Report of the Monitoring Officer

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#### Summary

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

#### Attachment(s)

None

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#### 1 General Matters

- 1.1 Since the board met on 18 November 2009, 19 enquiries have been recorded from Parish and Town Council Clerks and Councillors, District Councillors, and the general public, seeking advice on personal and prejudicial interests and code of conduct matters. Potential conflicts of interest and vacancies at Parish Council level are a particular concern to some Clerks. There are currently 25 vacant Parish and Town Council seats.
- 1.2 The annual update of Registration of Interest forms continues. A report on the current position will be presented to the next meeting

#### 2 Training

- 2.1 East Northamptonshire Local Councils Update - Local Council Clerks were invited to a Parish Update evening on 21 January hosted by ENC & Ncalc at the Council Offices in Thrapston. The event included feedback from the internal auditors, information on the power of wellbeing, meeting procedures, declaring interests and an opportunity to ask the experts on the panel.
- 2.2 Training for new members of the Standards Board took place on 16 December 2009, to bring them to the same level of awareness of existing Members who received in-depth training on the framework for the Code of Conduct and the Complaints Process up to Assessment on 18 November. A further training session will take place after this meeting to cover investigations and hearings.
- 2.3 A training session for Town and Parish Councillors on the Code of Conduct, aimed at new Councillors and those who would like a refresher session, will be held at East Northampton Council on 8 February. About 15 Councillors have so far expressed an interest. The Monitoring Officer has also been asked to visit Nassington Parish Council

#### 3 Standards for England

- 3.1 The return for the quarter ended 31 December 2010 has been made to the Standards for England. The key change reported was the closure of the most recent complaint following delivery of Refresher Code of Conduct Training to Councillors of the Council concerned.
- 3.2 There has been no further news of progress on the revised Code of Conduct at time of writing this report. It therefore seems unlikely that it will be implemented before the General Election.

<b>Implications:</b>					
<b>Corporate Outcomes or Other Policy/Priority/Strategy</b>					
Good Quality of Life	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good Reputation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Good Value for Money	<input type="checkbox"/>	High Quality Service Delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Effective Partnership Working	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong Community Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Effective Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of our Customers and Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Employees and Members with the Right Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Other: Ethical Framework/Governance Arrangements</b>					
Decision(s) would be outside the budget or policy framework and require full Council approval					
			<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Financial</b>	There are no financial implications at this stage				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There will be financial implications – see paragraph				<input type="checkbox"/>
	There is provision within existing budget				<input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure at a later date				<input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may have potential for income generation				<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Risk Management</b>	An assessment has been carried out and there are no material risks				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Material risks exist and these are recorded at Risk Register Reference - inherent risk score - residual risk score -				<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Staff</b>	There are no additional staffing implications				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Additional staff will be required – see paragraph				<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equalities and Human Rights</b>	There will be no impact on equality (race, age, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation) or human rights implications				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There will be an impact on equality (see categories above) or human rights implications – see paragraph				<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Legal</b>	Power: Local Government Act 2000; The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007				
	Other considerations: Standards Committee (Further Provisions) Regulations 2009				
<b>Background Papers:</b>					
<b>Person Originating Report:</b> Sharn Matthews, Monitoring Officer, 01832 742108, smatthews@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk					
<b>Date: 22 January 2010</b>					
<b>CFO</b>		<b>MO</b>		<b>CX</b>	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 19)