



East  
Northamptonshire  
Council

## Standards Board - 7 July 2010

### Activity Report of the Monitoring Officer

#### 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

#### 1.0 Parish and Town Council Activity

1.1 Since the board met on 7 April, 11 enquiries have been recorded from Parish and Town Council Clerks and Councillors, District Councillors and the general public, seeking advice on the complaints process, or personal and prejudicial interests and code of conduct matters.

1.2 Changes to the Town and Parish Council Registers of Interest continue as vacancies arise and are filled. There are currently 14 vacancies around the district.

#### 2.0 Training

2.1 No training events have been undertaken since the last Standards Committee. However planning is now starting for the Induction arrangements for Councillors following the District Elections in May 2011. This will include a session on ethical governance issues and the Code of Conduct, including the latest legislative requirements in force at the time.

#### 3.0 Complaints

3.1 An Assessment Sub Committee has met following a complaint received by the Monitoring Officer. A verbal update will be given at the meeting.

#### 4.0 Standards for England

4.1 The Coalition Government has confirmed its intention to abolish Standards for England. Appropriate provision to do this will be included in the forthcoming Localism Bill, expected to be published by the end of 2010.

4.2 It is not yet clear what other changes will be made to the standards framework at the same time. This may mean that there are changes to, or abolition of, the Code of Conduct or to the local assessment process

4.3 It has also been announced that the Bill would also end the unfair practice known as 'predetermination' which bars elected council members from taking part in decisions where they had campaigned or expressed a predisposed view.

4.4 The Annual Assembly of Standards Committees which was scheduled to take place in Birmingham on 18 and 19 October 2010 has now been cancelled.

4.5 Standards for England have announced the suspension of their first quarterly return for 2010/11 which would usually have to be submitted by the end of June. Standards for England are currently reviewing their monitoring arrangements and will announce any changes shortly.

## 5.0 Membership of this Committee

5.1 Graham Blagden has now reached the end of his first four year term of office. At the Council meeting on 19 July Council will be asked to approve his appointment for a second term of four years (assuming the local assessment regimen remains).

## 6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Members are asked to:

- a) note the contents of this report
- b) consider what the implications and issues might be arising from possible changes to the Code of Conduct or local assessment process.

<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 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:</b> Ethical Framework	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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 type="checkbox"/>
	There will be financial implications – see paragraph 4.2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There is provision within existing budget <input checked="" 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
	Other considerations:
<b>Background Papers:</b>	
<b>Person Originating Report:</b> Sharn Matthews, Monitoring Officer, 01832 742108, smatthews@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk	
<b>Date: 22 June 2010</b>	
<b>CFO</b>	<b>MO</b>
	<b>CX</b>

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 21)