



East
Northamptonshire
Council

Standards Board – 27 June 2011

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.

Attachment(s)

1.0 Parish and Town Activity

- 1.1 Since the board met on 6 April 2011, 6 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 Following the recent elections, there were 57 vacancies on town and parish councils across the district. Some of these vacancies will now be filled by co-option.
- 1.3 New registers of interest are being completed for all newly elected and co-opted councillors and most have been received by the Monitoring Officer within the 28 day time limit. Action is being taken to chase the outstanding forms.

2.0 ENC Standards Board

- 2.1 Following the recent elections and a resignation earlier in the year, the Standards Board currently has a vacancy for a district councillor and an independent member. Given the cessation of the current standards arrangements when the Localism Bill completes its passage through Parliament it is not proposed to fill these vacancies at this time. However should it appear necessary to seek additional members because of an increase in complaints assessment etc then this position will be reassessed.

3.0 Complaints

- 3.1 No new complaints have been received since the last meeting and there are no complaints currently being processed.

4.0 Training

- 4.1 Training for all ENC Councillors on the Constitution, Legislation and current Standards Regimen will be given on 22 June. Arrangements will be made to contact all members unable to attend on this day for catch-up sessions, particularly for new councillors.
- 4.2 Two joint training sessions with NCalc have been organised for town and parish councillors. The sessions were aimed at new councillors although all were welcome to attend. The sessions covered 10 tips to survive as a town or parish councillor together with a brief introduction to the current code of conduct. The first session attracted 13 councillors from 6 town and parish councils. The second session will take place on 30 June with over 15 councillors expressing an intention to attend.
- 4.3 Full training will be offered to ENC councillors once the Localism Bill is enacted and this council has decided what if anything will replace the current code and complaints regimen.

5.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 There are no specific equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. However it is clear that the council's constitution and other policies and procedures will have to be amended once the Localism Bill is finalised.

7.0 Risk Implications

7.1 There are no material risks arising from this report.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report

9.0 Corporate Outcomes

- 9.1 This report fulfils the following corporate outcomes:
- Strong community leadership (in relation to town and parish councillor training)
 - Members and staff with right knowledge, skills and behaviours

10.0 Recommendation

10.1 The board is recommended to note the contents of this report with regard to the level of current advice and complaint activity

(Reason - to monitor the workloads relating to the standards regimen and assess that the resources are appropriate to the demand).

Legal	Power: Local Government Act 2000 and Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007				
	Other considerations: Localism Bill				
Background Papers:					
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Date: 13/6/11					
CFO		MO		CX	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)