

A meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** will be held in **MEETING ROOM 1, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2007** at **4:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

## **APOLOGIES**

### **Contact**

**1. MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 4)

**C Deller  
388007**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th July 2007.

**2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

To receive from Members declarations as to personal and/or prejudicial interests and the nature of those interests in relation to any agenda item. Please see Notes 1 and 2 below.

**3. ARTICLE 9 - STANDARDS COMMITTEE** (Pages 5 - 6)

Further to Minute No.13, to note the contents of Article 9 of the Constitution relating to the Standards Committee.

**4. CODE OF CONDUCT - NOTIFICATIONS** (Pages 7 - 8)

**C Deller  
388007**

To consider a report by the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer regarding notifications received from the Standards Board for England on decisions made in respect of allegations of misconduct by a District Councillor and by Members serving on St. Ives Town Council.

**5. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS - THE FUTURE** (Pages 9 - 14)

**C Deller  
388007**

To consider a report by the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer.

**6. TRAINING UPDATE** (Pages 15 - 20)

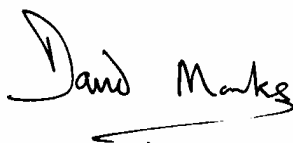
**C Deller  
388007**

To consider a report by the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer.

## 7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next ordinary meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 6th December 2007 at 4pm.

Dated this 5 day of September 2007



Chief Executive

### Notes

1. *A personal interest exists where a decision on a matter would affect to a greater extent than other people in the District –*
  - (a) *the well-being, financial position, employment or business of the Councillor, their family or any person with whom they had a close association;*
  - (b) *a body employing those persons, any firm in which they are a partner and any company of which they are directors;*
  - (c) *any corporate body in which those persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or*
  - (d) *the Councillor's registerable financial and other interests.*
2. *A personal interest becomes a prejudicial interest where a member of the public (who has knowledge of the circumstances) would reasonably regard the Member's personal interest as being so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.*

**Please contact Ms C Deller, Democratic Services Manager, Tel No 01480 388007/e-mail: [Christine.Deller@huntsdc.gov](mailto:Christine.Deller@huntsdc.gov). if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee.**

**Specific enquires with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.**

**Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.**

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website – [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk) (under Councils and Democracy).

If you would like a translation of

Agenda/Minutes/Reports or would like a large text version or an audio version please contact the Democratic Services Manager and we will try to accommodate your needs.

***Emergency Procedure***

*In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit and to make their way to the car park adjacent to the Methodist Church on the High Street (opposite Prima's Italian Restaurant).*

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# Agenda Item 1

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the STANDARDS COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 5th July 2007.

PRESENT: Mr D L Hall – Chairman  
Councillors J D Ablewhite,  
Mrs B E Boddington, P J Downes,  
R S Farrer, I R Muir and T D Sanderson.  
Messrs P L Boothman, M Lynch,  
D MacPherson and G Watkins

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor G S E Thorpe.

### 10. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14th June 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 11. MEMBER'S INTERESTS

Councillor Mrs B E Boddington declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 12 by virtue of her membership of Great Gransden Parish Council.

Councillor T D Sanderson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 12 by virtue of his membership of Huntingdon Town Council.

### 12. APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

*(See Minute No. 11 for Members' interests).*

The Committee were acquainted, by way of a report by the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) with the details of six applications received for dispensations which would allow Members of Colne, Ellington, Great Gransden, Huntingdon, St. Neots and Upwood and The Raveleys Town and Parish Councils to discuss and vote on matters relating to particular circumstances in their parishes.

Having considered the circumstances of each application in turn, the Committee reiterated their unease at granting dispensations in a situation where all Members of a Town/Parish Council served as trustees to a community facility. It was the view of Members that other individuals unrelated to the local council should be invited to act as Trustees given the inevitable conflicts of interest which could arise.

Having been reminded that the Charity Commission had offered, in the past, to assist town and parish councils to vary their trustee arrangements to overcome conflicts of interest, the Committee requested the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer to suggest to those Parish Councils from whom applications had been submitted that they explore ways of changing their trustee arrangements to encourage people other than Councillors to become trustees.

In view of some uncertainty in the detail of the application received from Huntingdon Town Council in respect of the Board of Trustees for the Commemoration Hall, Huntingdon, the Committee requested the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer to seek further clarification from the Deputy Town Clerk which would demonstrate that the transaction of the Town Council's business would be impeded if the six members referred to in the application were not granted dispensation.

Having been reminded of the provisions of the Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) (Dispensations) Regulations 2002 and been satisfied that approval was required in the remaining cases to prevent the transaction of Parish Council business from being impeded, the Committee

#### RESOLVED

- (a) that dispensation to speak and vote be granted to Colne Village Parish Council for the period ending 30th April 2011 to enable them to speak and vote on matters relating to the Village Hall and Playing Fields in Colne;
- (b) that dispensation to speak and vote be granted to four Members of Ellington Parish Council for the period ending 30th April 2011 to enable them to speak and vote on matters relating to the Ellington Village Hall Management Committee;
- (c) that dispensation to speak and vote be granted to Great Gransden Parish Council for the period ending 30th April 2011 to enable Members to speak and vote on matters relating to Great Gransden Reading Room and Public Recreation Ground;
- (d) that dispensation to speak and vote be granted to Huntingdon Town Council for the period ending 30th April 2011 to enable Members to speak and vote on matters relating to the King George V Playing Field, Huntingdon;
- (e) that dispensation to speak and vote be granted to St. Neots Town Council for the period ending 30th April 2011 to enable Members to speak and vote on matters relating to St. Neots Outdoor Swimming Pool and Ackerman Street Playing Field, Eaton Socon; and

- (f) that dispensation to speak and vote be granted to Upwood and The Raveleys Parish Council for the period ending 30th April 2011 to enable Members to speak and vote on matters relating to the Charities associated with allotments for the poor in the Parish.

### **13. TRAINING ISSUES**

Further to Minute No. 6 of their meeting held on 14th June 2007, the Committee received a report by the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) proposing an approach to be taken by the Monitoring Officer towards training activity on the new Code of Conduct. In response to Members' comments at the last meeting, the Committee also noted a case summary which illustrated the requirements of the Code in terms of the declaration of personal and prejudicial interests.

During a wide ranging discussion, the Committee were advised that training on the Code of Conduct could not be made mandatory for all Councillors, that depending on the response, consideration would be given to hosting an additional training session in the north of the District and that the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer would seek to establish, after 1st October, whether all town and parish councils in Huntingdonshire had adopted the new Model Code.

Having also commented on their role and terms of reference, the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer undertook to place a copy of Article 9 of the Constitution relating to the Committee, on the Agenda for the next meeting.

### **14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held at 4pm on Thursday 13th September 2007.

Chairman

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# Agenda Item 3

## ARTICLE 9 EXTRACT FROM THE CONSTITUTION

### 1. **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The Council shall at the annual meeting establish a Standards Committee.

### 2. **MEMBERSHIP**

The Standards Committee shall comprise -

- ◆ 7 members of the Council including no more than one member of the Cabinet but excluding the Leader;
- ◆ 3 independent members who are not councillors or officers of the Council or any other local authority; and
- ◆ 2 town or parish councillors, representing town and parish councils in the District.

A member of the Cabinet may not chair the Committee.

The independent members shall be appointed to serve on the Committee for a term of four years from the date of their appointment and in the event that the independent member fails to attend a meeting or function associated with the Committee for a period of nine months, that member would be automatically disqualified from membership of the Committee.

The Chairman of the Committee, or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman, irrespective of whether that person is an elected Member, should present the report of the Committee at Council meetings.

### 3. **VALIDITY OF PROCEEDINGS**

The independent members and town or parish councillor will be entitled to vote at meetings. The quorum for a meeting of the Committee is at least three members of the Council and at least one independent member. The town or parish councillor must be present when matters relating to town and parish councils or their members are being considered.

Where at least one independent member would have been present for the duration of the meeting but for the fact that he was prevented or restricted from participating in any business of the authority by virtue of its Code of Conduct, the above requirement for the quorum to include at least one independent member shall not apply.

### 4. **FUNCTIONS AND ROLE**

The Standards Committee will have the following functions and roles in respect of the District Council and its members and town and parish councils and their members -

- ◆ promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by members;
- ◆ assisting members and co-opted members to observe their authority's code of conduct;

#### ARTICLE 9 EXTRACT FROM THE CONSTITUTION

- ◆ advising the Council on the adoption or revision of a Members' Code of Conduct and monitoring the operation of the Code;
- ◆ advising, training or arranging to train members and co-opted members on matters relating to the Code;
- ◆ granting dispensations to councillors and co-opted members from the requirements relating to interests in the Members' Code of Conduct;
- ◆ dealing with reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal or any report from the Monitoring Officer on any matter which is referred by an Ethical Standards Officers to the Monitoring Officer;

The Standards Committee shall have the following other functions in respect of the District Council and its members -

- ◆ formulating and recommending to the Council for adoption a Protocol for Member/Officer Relations and monitoring the operation of the Protocol; and
- ◆ adoption of a Code of Conduct for Planning and monitoring the operation of the Code.

**CODE OF CONDUCT: STANDARDS BOARD NOTIFICATIONS  
(Report by the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 In accordance with the procedure adopted by the Standards Board for England for the investigation of allegations, the Monitoring Officer has been notified of the Board's decision in respect of –

- ◆ an allegation made against a District Councillor ( Case 1);  
and
- ◆ allegations made against six Councillors serving on St. Ives Town Council (Case 2).

**2. DETAILS OF CASE ONE**

2.1 It had been alleged that a District Councillor had a poor understanding of planning laws and procedures, evidenced at a meeting of Stilton Parish Council on 27th March 2007, thus damaging the reputation of his office and the authority and mis-using the authority's resources.

2.2 In reaching a conclusion on the complaint, the Board considered that the issue complained of was related to the competence of the Councillor rather than his ethical conduct. The Board regulates the ethical conduct of Members, not the quality or accuracy of their work and it was not considered that the alleging conduct amounted to a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct. The Board decided that the allegation should not be referred to an Ethical Standards Officer for investigation nor that a breach of the code of conduct was disclosed.

**3. DETAILS OF CASE TWO**

3.1 The background to case two involved the proposed sale of St. Ives Corn Exchange by St. Ives Town Council. Complaints were submitted on behalf of the Action Corn Exchange Group and related to various matters, allegedly that the Councillors involved with the sale of the building made poor quality decisions, behaved in an un-democratic fashion and did not adequately pursue alternative solutions to its sale.

- 3.2 In response, the Standards Board for England contended that it exists to monitor the ethical conduct of individual councillors. It does not have jurisdiction to consider complaints relating to the actions of the Council as a whole, nor the decisions of Committees of the Council. In the main, the Board considered that the allegations referred to related to the general actions of the Council as a whole. Similarly, the Board believed that it does not have the jurisdiction to consider allegations relating to the quality of Councillors work or their decisions.
- 3.3 Additionally, the Board considered that it was normal political practice for Councillors to take opinionated stances on local matters which at times might bring them into conflict with others of differing opinions. It was noted that the potential sale of the Corn Exchange was a controversial local issue and that tempers were running high on both sides whilst dealing with these matters. It was considered normal practice for Councillors to robustly defend their views. There is an expectation that such commentary would not stray into disrespect or bullying and this was not evidenced in the case in point. Whilst it was alleged that information was deliberately withheld and that meetings were held in private, the allegations did not support the view that this had been done in order to improperly influence any decision-making surrounding the potential sale, or that it had been done in order to deliberately mislead anyone. Accordingly, the Standards Board decided that the allegations should not be referred to an Ethical Standards Officer for investigation. In addition, the Board did not believe that potential breaches of the code of conduct were disclosed by the six Members against whom the complaints had been made.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The Committee is invited to note that the Standards Board for England had agreed not to take any further action in relation to allegations made against a District Councillor and six members of St. Ives Town Council.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Letters received from the Standards Board for England dated 21st June and 9th August 2007.

**Contact Officer: Christine Deller, Democratic Services Manager -  
Tel: (01480) 388007.**

**CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS – THE FUTURE**  
**(Report by the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement In Health Bill is currently before the House of Lords and is expected to receive Royal Assent in the Autumn.
- 1.2 The Bill proposes the introduction of two key changes to the management of compliance with the Code of Conduct as follows:
- ◆ greater emphasis on a locally managed framework involving local Standards Committees making initial assessments of misconduct allegations with most cases similarly being handled locally; and
  - ◆ a revised strategic regulatory role for the Standards Board to provide supervision, support and guidance for local authorities and to ensure a degree of consistency in the application of the Code.
- 1.3 Some investigations and hearings are already carried out locally by Standards Committees. Under the new arrangements, authorities' Standards Committees initially will receive all complaints relating to the Code.
- 1.4 Standards Committees will decide whether to defer complaints for further action locally, whether to refer complaints to the Standards Board, or whether no further action should be taken. Aside from asking for an investigation, Standards Committees will also be able to resolve cases by alternative means such as mediation or training. In cases where the Committee considers the sanctions available to it are insufficient, cases can be referred to the Adjudication Panel for England.

**2. ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL WORKLOAD**

- 2.1 It is the view of the Standards Board that for the majority of authorities the impact of the local system is likely to be relatively minimal. This view reflects the experience of the Standards Board during the financial year 2006 – 2007 when the Board received about 3,500 complaints under the Code, of which just under 700 (an average of approximately 18%) were referred for investigation.
- 2.2 On average, based on the number of complaints received by the Board over the last five years, all authorities could expect to receive approximately six complaints a year. On top of this, a District Council with 20 parishes may expect about three or four complaints a year

about their parishes. A District Council with 100 or more Parishes may expect around 18 parish complaints each year.

2.3 Some authorities, however may receive no allegations at all over a significant period. Of the 8,000 parish and town councils nationally, 80% have not been the subject of a single complaint over five years. There has been at least one complaint about a member of each District Council over the same five year period. Of the authorities which are not Districts, 25% have not had any complaints in five years.

2.4 A small number of authorities have received a significant number of complaints about their Members or about Members of one or more of their parishes. In the worst case, 125 complaints were made over five years about Members of a principal authority.

### **3. POTENTIAL IMPACT OF NEW REGIME**

3.1 The Standards Board estimates that individual complaints will take an average of two and a half hours to assess upon receipt. Pilot work on the local filter has revealed that Standards Committees will take up to an hour to reach a decision on whether to refer a complaint for further action based on the information available.

3.2 It is expected that authorities would refer only some of the complaints they receive for investigation, although the pilot work has indicated that Standards Committees may refer a greater proportion of the complaints they receive in the earlier stages of the local system as it becomes established.

3.3 As authorities become increasingly proficient in determining complaints, the Board estimate that even authorities which receive the higher volume of complaints will refer about 25% per year for further action. In terms of the impact on workload, therefore, based on an average six complaints per year and a referral rate of 25% across all authorities, an average authority can expect to conduct one or two investigations per year. For a district council with over 100 parishes, an average of around six investigations per year could be anticipated. Whilst these are average assumptions, they do provide a guideline to the increase in workload that authorities can expect with a move to a locally based framework.

3.4 It is the view of the Board that Standards Committees will have the opportunity to promote high ethical standards in their authority. This will be done through developing effective procedures for managing the local system in the following ways:-

- (i) responding to and deciding complaints in the right way and on time;
- (ii) becoming proficient in identifying what is appropriate for investigations/sanction and what is not;
- (iii) being proportionate in their decisions to the nature of the issue and the harm caused;
- (iv) aiming to resolve the harm caused by non-compliance and aiming to deter future non-compliance; and
- (v) participating fully in the reporting protocols operated by the Standards Board and sharing good practice.

- 3.5 The Standards Board will monitor the operation of the local filter by –
- (i) ensuring reporting systems are as simple as possible whilst allowing local authorities to do their job effectively;
  - (ii) measuring outcomes as well as outputs;
  - (iii) offering support and guidance where authorities may be experiencing difficulties;
  - (iv) using their statutory powers to remove local powers only as a last resort and only after efforts to support the authority have been unsuccessful; and
  - (v) ensuring that monitoring is complimentary to and does not duplicate the work of other regulators. The Board has also indicated that they will share good practice and ensure that they are responsive, offering guidance and support to local authorities.

#### **4. UPDATE ON PILOT PROJECTS**

- 4.1 An exercise in filtering 10 “real life” allegations and reviewing 2 appeal cases has been completed by 38 Standards Committees. Several Committees were facilitated or observed by Officers from the Standards Board Monitoring and Audit Team who were able to gain a valuable insight into how a local filter would operate at local level.
- 4.2 Those Standards Committee Members and Monitoring Officers involved in the exercise benefited from training in undertaking the local filter and operating the appeal mechanism as set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill. The Board has also received constructive feedback from each volunteer authority. This feedback will now be used to contribute to the shaping of national policy, sharing of good practice and in helping the Board develop its guidance to relevant authorities.
- 4.3. The Standards Board Monitoring and Audit Team is developing a way in which it will monitor, assess and demonstrate compliance with the new statutory regime at local level. An on-line information returns system, based on periodic returns and an annual report will be tested with volunteer authorities in Autumn 2007. It has been suggested that the system will be proportionate to the monitoring needs of the Board and will not add an undue burden to authorities. The types of information to be collected include:-
- ◆ the timeliness of carrying out investigations and hearings;
  - ◆ the outcomes of different stages of the process; and
  - ◆ any failure by an authority to meet statutory requirements in respect of its Standards Committee.

The approach is intended to support improvement, to enable authorities to be kept informed at regular intervals about their own performance and to enable the Standards Board to analyse the information received in order to identify good practice.

**5. REFERRAL AND INVESTIGATIONS STATISTICS**

- 5.1 In the light of the development of the Committee's workload in Spring 2008, Members might be interested to review the referral and investigations statistics produced by the Board in their recent Bulletin No. 35. These are appended hereto.

**6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 With the expected move towards the locally based ethical framework from April 2008, the Committee is requested to note the likely impact on the authority and the latest referral and investigation statistics.

**Contact Officer: Christine Deller, Democratic Services Manager -  
Tel: (01480) 388007.**

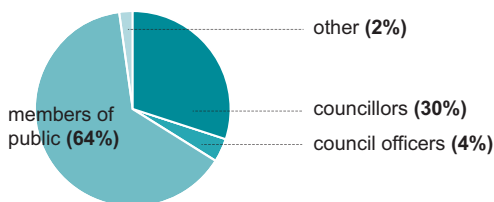


## Referral and investigation statistics

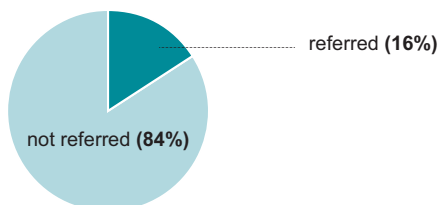
The Standards Board for England received 1238 allegations between 1 April 2007 and 31 July 2007, compared to 1131 during the same period in 2006.

The following charts show referral and investigation statistics during the above dates.

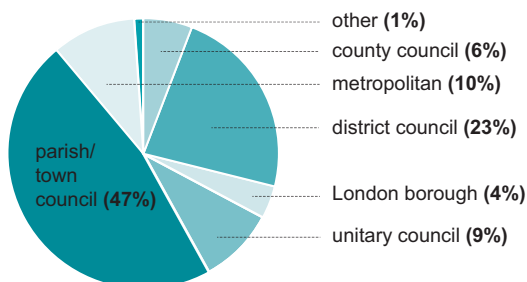
### Source of allegations received



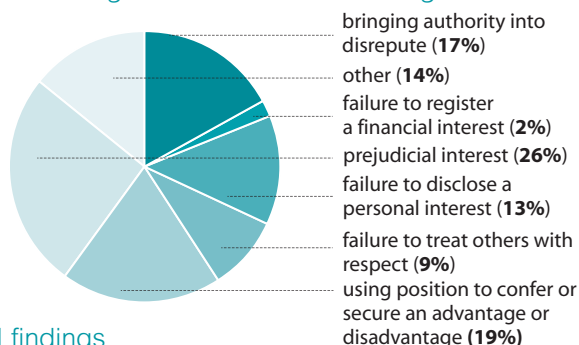
### Allegations referred for investigation



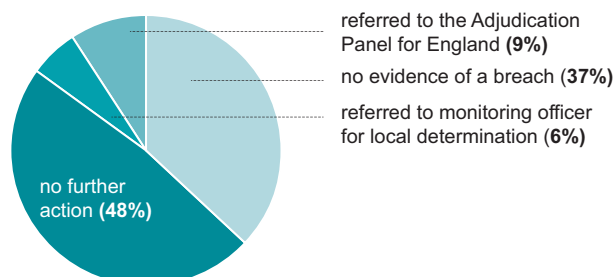
### Authority of subject member in allegations referred for investigation



### Nature of allegations referred for investigation



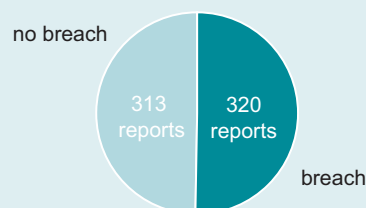
### Final findings



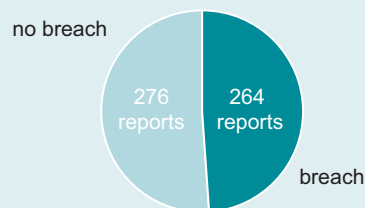
## Local investigation statistics

For the period 1 April 2007 to 31 July 2007, ethical standards officers referred 123 cases for local investigation – equivalent to 60% of all cases referred for investigation. Since 1 April 2007 there have been five appeals to the Adjudication Panel for England following standards committee hearings. Of all cases referred since November 2004 for local investigation, we have received a total of 633 reports – please see below for a statistical breakdown of these cases.

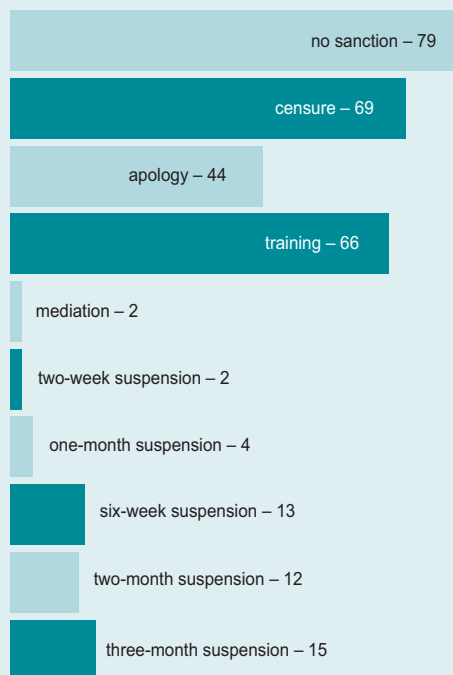
### Monitoring officers' recommendations following local investigations



### Standards committee hearings



### Standards committee determinations



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## TRAINING - UPDATE

(Report by the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the last meeting, the Committee noted the approach to be taken by the Monitoring Officer towards training activity on the new Code of Conduct (Minute No. 13 refers).
- 1.2 A programme of training for District, Town and Parish Councillors on the requirements of the new Code of Conduct was compiled and invitations sent to Town and Parish Councils in Huntingdonshire. A copy of the final programme is enclosed. When issuing an invitation to the sessions, Parish Councils were reminded that the Monitoring Officer and his colleagues were available to attend individual Town and Parish Council meetings should that be preferred.

### 2. RESPONSE

- 2.1 At the time of writing, the Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Manager have hosted three sessions. The first, held in July, for Town and Parish Councils was well received and attended by 18 Parish Councillors representing the following parishes – Barham and Woolley, Buckden, Buckworth, Bluntisham, Colne, Fenstanton, Great Paxton, Little Paxton, St. Neots and Ramsey. Each representative has received a certificate of attendance and the training register has been updated accordingly. A similar sized attendance is expected in St. Ives on 5th September 2007. By the time of the Committee meeting, the programme will have concluded and the Monitoring Officer will be in a position to report on the overall impact of the sessions.
- 2.2 Nineteen District Councillors have attended the two drop-in sessions held thus far at Pathfinder House.
- 2.3 Arrangements also have been made for either the Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services Manager to attend meetings of the following Town/Parish Councils during the Autumn –  
  
4th October – Little Paxton  
11th October – Godmanchester  
31st October – St. Ives  
1st November – Huntingdon
- 2.4 An enquiry also has been received about the possibility of a joint session with Ellington, Stow Longa and Spaldwick Parish Councils if a suitable venue/date can be established to the convenience of the Members of each authority.

- 2.5 The Chairman of the Committee and the newly appointed Independent Members attended the session at the Leisure Centre in St. Ives on 5th September 2007.

### **3. CAMBRIDGESHIRE STANDARDS COMMITTEES NETWORK**

- 3.1 The Chairman and Democratic Services Manager will be representing Huntingdonshire at the next meeting of the Cambridgeshire Standards Committees Network which comprises Standards Committee Chairmen and Monitoring Officers' staff from the Cambridgeshire Authorities. The network is to meet on Monday 29th October at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council. Members are invited to submit Agenda Items for discussion and thus far the following have arisen -

- ◆ A year in the life of ..... (updates from authority Members);
- ◆ local filter process – national pilot project;
- ◆ possible merger of Cambridgeshire and Suffolk Standards Committee Networks.

Members of the Committee are welcome to highlight any issues they would wish the Chairman to raise at this meeting.

### **4. DVD**

- 4.1 The Committee will recall that the Standards Board for England has produced a range of training materials on the new Code for local authorities to use, including a DVD. Despite suggestions that the DVD would be made available in July it has still not been received. It is understood that the "Code Uncovered", the Board's new training DVD, will now be distributed to all Monitoring Officers and County Association Secretaries by the week ending 7th September. Should it be available, the DVD will be shown at the meeting. The DVD uses a dramatised scenario to illustrate the lead up to a potentially explosive Planning Committee meeting and highlights the key changes to the revised Code of Conduct. The film examines the rules about declaring interests, disclosing confidential information and bullying. It also features learning points, identifying key elements to consider when following the rules governing Members' behaviour.

### **5. PRE-DETERMINATION OR BIAS – AN OCCASIONAL PAPER**

- 5.1 In response to Members' enquiries about the availability of case studies and best practice guidance, an occasional paper produced by the Standards Board for England on "Predisposition, Predetermination or Bias, and the Code" was recently circulated to all elected and co-opted Members of the Council.

- 5.2 Pre-determination and bias have proved to be both difficult and controversial issues for many Members and Monitoring Officers and it is hoped that the paper, based on advice from leading Treasury Counsel, Philip Sales, QC, will be helpful in that respect.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

6.1 The Committee is requested to note –

- ◆ the success and extent of the training activity undertaken on the new Code of Conduct; and
- ◆ the upcoming meeting of the Cambridgeshire Standards Committee Network; and

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Correspondence received from Parish Councils, Standards Board Bulletin Number 34.

**Contact Officer: Christine Deller, Democratic Services Manager -  
Tel: (01480) 388007.**

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**NEW MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT  
PROPOSED TRAINING PROGRAMME**

19

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>VENUE</b>	<b>INVITEES</b>
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> July	7.30pm – 9pm	Council Chamber Pathfinder House Huntingdon	Parish Councils (New Councillors – principally)
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> August	6.15pm – 7pm	Cabinet Room Pathfinder House Huntingdon	District Councillors Drop In Session
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> September	5.15pm – 6pm	Cabinet Room Pathfinder House Huntingdon	District Councillors Drop In Session
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> September	7.30pm – 9pm	Aquarius Room St Ivo Leisure Centre Westwood Road St Ives	Parish Councils (Chairmen and Clerks or other representative)
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> September	6.15pm – 7pm	Cabinet Room Pathfinder House Huntingdon	District Councillors Drop In Session
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> September	7.30pm – 9pm	Moot Room 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Priory Centre Priory Lane, St Neots Cambs PE19 2BH	Parish Councils (Chairmen and Clerks or other representative)

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