

A meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** will be held in the **AQUARIUS ROOM, ST IVO LEISURE CENTRE, WESTWOOD ROAD, ST IVES PE27 6WU** on **THURSDAY, 4 MARCH 2010** at **4:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

A G E N D A

APOLOGIES

Contact

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting on 3rd December 2009.

C Deller
388007

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 Items - Please See Notes 1 and 2 below.

3. REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES

(a) Referrals (Assessment) Sub-Committee

Meetings held on 12th January, 2nd February and 2nd March 2010.

(b) Standards (Consideration and Hearing) Sub-Committee

(c) Review Sub-Committee

The Chairmen of the Sub-Committees to report on the business considered since the last meeting.

4. UPDATE ON CASE NO. 15

The Committee will recall that the Referrals (Assessment) Sub-Committee considered a complaint which had alleged a breach of paragraph 6 (c) of the Code of Conduct relating to the Local Authority Code of Publicity. The complaint exposed a significant issue with regard to the level of awareness of the Council in question of the content of the Code of Publicity. The Sub-Committee requested the Monitoring Officer to ensure that the Code was drawn to the attention of all town and parish Councils in Huntingdonshire on the eve of elections in any year irrespective of whether an election is scheduled in a parish or not.

In accordance with this instruction, the Director of Central Services has reminded Town and Parish Councils of the requirements of the Code of Publicity via e-mail on 1st February 2010. The Monitoring Officer has also incorporated a section on the Code of Publicity in his training presentation to Town and Parish Councils.

5. UPDATE ON CODE REVISION

Members will be aware that the Department of Communities and Local Government is responsible for dealing with revisions to the Members' Code of Conduct and for introducing a new national code for officers. Despite earlier indications that a revised code of conduct would be published before May, the Department has now announced that a new code of conduct for Members will not be laid during this Parliamentary Session. The Department has advised Standards for England that as the Government would be concentrating on financial instruments there would not be sufficient Parliamentary time available for the Code. In practice this means that a new code will not now be made until after a General Election.

6. LOG OF CODE OF CONDUCT ENQUIRIES (Pages 5 - 8)

To note the Code of Conduct enquiries recorded by the Head of Law, Property and Governance and Monitoring Officer since the meeting held in December.

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7. BIAS, PRE-DETERMINATION AND THE CODE (Pages 9 - 12)

At the 2009 Annual Assembly, 'Standards for England' presented a session called "understanding pre-determination and bias". This examined the relationship between bias, pre-determination and the Code of Conduct. The session proved to be hugely successful in providing information that all Standards Committees and Monitoring Officers should be aware of particularly as it drew upon recent and relevant case law in this area. Accordingly, enclosed is a short article which attempts to draw out some of the key messages from the session to ease understanding of the relationship between pre-determination and the Code.

8. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION - ST. IVES TOWN COUNCIL (Pages 13 - 14)

To consider a report by the Head of Law, Property and Governance.

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9. ANNUAL RETURN 2010 (Pages 15 - 16)

To consider a report by the Head of Law, Property and Governance.

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10. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION - CODE OF CONDUCT ADVICE AND RECENT TRIBUNAL DETERMINATIONS (Pages 17 - 24)

The following are enclosed for discussion and learning purposes –

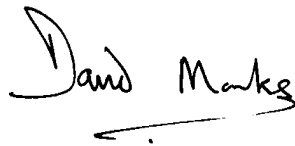
Quick Guide: Freemasons and the Code of Conduct;

Case Summaries from Blackpool Borough and Daventry District Councils.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Committee will be held at 4pm on Thursday 8th July 2010 in the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon.

Dated this 25 day of February 2010



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.uk 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 Panel.

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.

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.