

A meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** will be held in **ROOM CVSO1A, CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, HUNTINGDON, CAMBS, PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 2 DECEMBER 2010** at **4:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

APOLOGIES

Contact

**C Deller
388007**

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2010.

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

The Sub-Committee met on 10th September and 22nd October 2010 and over two meetings assessed four cases relating to Members serving on Huntingdonshire District Council and Fenstanton and Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Councils. No further action was recommended in all cases.

(b) Review Sub-Committee

Following a recommendation by the Referrals (Assessment) Sub-Committee of "no further action" in a case involving a Member of Huntingdonshire District Council, the complainant appealed against the decision and this appeal was heard by the Review Sub-Committee on 22nd October 2010. After detailed consideration, the Sub-Committee agreed to uphold the original decision of the Referrals (Assessment) Sub-Committee having concurred with the conclusion that there was no breach of the Code of Conduct in the case.

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

The Sub-Committee met on 4th November 2010 to hear the outcome of an investigation into a complaint involving a Member of Yaxley Parish Council. The Sub-Committee concurred with the recommendations of the Investigating Officer and agreed that the

Councillor concerned be suspended for a period of two months from 25th November 2010 to 25th January 2011 or until such time as he undertakes training on the Code of Conduct. It was strongly recommended that the other Members of the Parish Council and the Parish Clerk also should receive training on the Code of Conduct and subsequently a session for this purpose has been arranged to be held on 24th November 2010.

4. STANDARDS FOR ENGLAND - LATEST? (Pages 5 - 6)

**C Meadowcroft
388021**

Update by the Head of Law, Property and Governance and Monitoring Officer on the latest developments following the Government's announcement "to abolish the Standards Board" regime.

Latest press notice published by 'Standards for England', enclosed.

5. STANDARDS UPDATE (Pages 7 - 8)

**C Deller
388007**

Further to Minute No. 21 of the meeting held on 9th September 2010 and given the indication that it is the Government's intention to legislate for the abolition of 'Standards for England', the Members Code of Conduct and local standards committees, the Chairman has agreed to postpone the process for the appointment to the Committee of an additional town and parish council representative. The Monitoring Officer has written to the six Parish Councillors who had submitted applications to thank them for the interest they had expressed in the position.

An article has been included in the December's addition of District Wide regarding the Committee's Annual Report and a copy is appended hereto.

6. CODE OF RECOMMENDED PRACTICE ON LOCAL AUTHORITY PUBLICITY: CONSULTATION (Pages 9 - 24)

**C Meadowcroft
388021**

On 29th September 2010, the Government published for consultation a new Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity. The timescale for a response was short and regrettably, the closing date for representations was 10th November which fell outside the Committee's cycle of meetings. The proposed new code will be underpinned by seven guiding principles. To give effect to the Government's commitment to stop unfair competition by local authority newspapers, the proposed new Code now contains specific guidance on the frequency, content and appearance of local authority newspapers or magazines. It also proposes to prohibit the use of lobbyists where the expenditure is intended to influence local people on political issues. Copies of the consultation document and the response to it by the Association of Council Secretaries & Solicitors are enclosed for information.

7. LOG OF CODE OF CONDUCT ENQUIRIES (Pages 25 - 28)

**C Meadowcroft
388021**

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

8. **DUAL HATTED MEMBERS AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT** (Pages 29 - 30) **C Meadowcroft 388021**

Recently published guidance by 'Standards for England'.

9. **STANDARDS FOR ENGLAND CASE REVIEW 2010** **C Meadowcroft 388021**

'Standards for England' has prepared a new edition of its Case Review which can be accessed from their website using the following link. This year, 'Standards for England' will not be distributing a printed version but it will be available to download from their website shortly. This edition of the Case Review also includes links to the decisions that have been made by the First Tier Tribunal.

<http://www.standardsforengland.gov.uk/CaseinformationReporting/OnlineCaseReview2010>

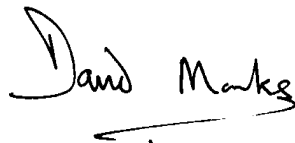
10. **SUMMARIES OF RECENTLY COMPLETED INVESTIGATIONS** (Pages 31 - 40) **C Meadowcroft 388021**

To note a case summary involving North Tynecastle Council recently published by 'Standards for England' and one which has been determined by the First Tier Tribunal General Regulatory Chamber.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 3rd March 2011 at 4pm in the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St. Mary's Street, Huntingdon.

Dated this 24th day of November 2010

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Mankie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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 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 (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.