

A meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** will be held in **ROOM CVSO1a, CIVIC SUITE, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 3 MARCH 2011** 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 2nd December 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 item – please see Notes 1 and 2 below.

3. **REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES**

**C Meadowcroft  
388021**

**Referrals (Assessment) Sub-Committee**

The Sub-Committee met on 21st December 2010 and 10th February 2011.

At the December meeting, the Sub-Committee assessed complaints involving two Members of Ramsey Town Council and one Member of Upwood and The Raveleys Parish Council. In terms of the Town Council Members, the Sub-Committee recommended that no further action be taken by the Monitoring Officer in one case but identified a clear breach of the Code of Conduct by the Councillor involved in the other. As the breach appeared to result from a misunderstanding of the Code of Conduct, the Sub-Committee recommended that the Councillor undertake training and that the opportunity also be extended to the remainder of the Town Council. This session will take place on Monday 7th March at Ramsey Town Council offices. As the conduct of the Councillor from Upwood and The Raveleys Council was not of the standard required of an elected representative he agreed to write a letter of apology to the complainant concerned.

At the meeting in February, the Sub-Committee assessed a complaint against a District Councillor and agreed that he should apologise in writing for his conduct to the complainant and that this action be reported formally to the Development Management Panel.

The Review and Consideration & Hearing Sub Committees have not met in the period since the last meeting.

4. **FUTURE OF THE LOCAL STANDARDS FRAMEWORK - UPDATE**  
(Pages 5 - 10)

**C Meadowcroft  
388021**

The Government set out its intention to abolish the Standards Board regime in the Coalition Agreement published in May 2010. Subsequently, the Localism Bill was introduced to Parliament on 13th December 2010. The second reading of the Bill took place in the House of Commons on 17th January 2011.

It is understood from "Standards for England" that they will cease to investigate complaints in late 2011 and will be formally abolished in early 2012.

Enclosed for the Committee's information is –

- a statement from the Department of Communities and Local Government; and
- a summary on the effect of the provisions in the Localism Bill relating to standards.

**5. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE** (Pages 11 - 12)

**C Meadowcroft  
388021**

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

**6. CODE OF RECOMMENDED PRACTICE ON LOCAL AUTHORITY PUBLICITY** (Pages 13 - 18)

**C Meadowcroft  
388007**

Further to Minute No 30 of the last meeting, the Committee may recall that the Department for Communities & Local Government had issued a draft consultation document seeking comments on a revised Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity. This consultation closed on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

The Publicity Code provides guidance on the content, style, distribution and cost of local authority publicity. Local authorities are required by legislation to consider the Code in coming to any decision on publicity, which is defined as any communication, in whatever form, addressed to the public or a section of the public.

The Communities and Local Government Select Committee undertook a short enquiry on the draft revised Code on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2010. Their report was published on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2011. A revised Code was laid before Parliament for approval on 11<sup>th</sup> February. It is intended that the revised Publicity Code will come into force as soon as possible following a debate in each of the Houses.

A copy of the revised Code is enclosed.

**7. LOG OF CODE OF CONDUCT ENQUIRIES** (Pages 19 - 20)

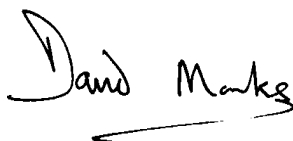
**C Meadowcroft  
388007**

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

## 8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Committee will be held at 4pm on Thursday 7th July 2011.

Dated this 23 day of February 2011



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](mailto: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](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.*