
Standards Committee

Report of the meeting held on 17th December 2003

Matters for Information

11. ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION STRATEGY

In conjunction with the Employment Panel and the Cabinet, the Committee has endorsed a proposed Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy subject to a minor amendment to the text of the Strategy to reflect that the District Council will pursue “appropriate action in all instances where fraud, corruption and theft are found”.

Arrangements will be made to publicise the District Council’s commitment to the prevention of fraud, corruption and theft to the public, employees and Members using the local press, the District Council’s website and “District-wide”. The Strategy will be reviewed annually with a report on the outcome submitted to the Committee.

12. WHISTLEBLOWING – POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Committee has undertaken its third annual review of the operation of the whistleblowing policy and procedure which was first established in response to the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1999. The policy provides the framework for staff to make a disclosure or whistleblow about wrong doing within the Council. Although the annual review has concluded that the policy and procedure do not require amendment, publicity will be given to the existence of the policy both internally and externally to the Council. The policy, procedure and electronic disclosure form also will be published on the Council’s web site and a standard whistleblowing condition will be prepared and included in all contracts that exceed £30,000.

13. LOCAL AUTHORITIES (CODE OF CONDUCT) (LOCAL DETERMINATIONS) REGULATIONS 2003

Further to Item No. 7 of their Report to the Council meeting held on 24th September 2003, the Committee has now approved a procedure which will assist in preparations for and the conduct of hearings in anticipation of the reference of cases by the Standards Board for England for determination under the Local Determination Regulations. The Committee will be required to consider whether or not a District or Parish Member has failed to follow the relevant Council’s Code of Conduct and, if so, to decide whether or not a penalty should be applied and what form that penalty should take. The Committee has authorised the Executive Director of Central

Services and Monitoring Officer, after consultation with the Chairman to administer the pre-hearing process and to convene and appoint five Members to comprise the Panel in the event that a case is referred to the District Council by the Standards Board.

**14. MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT –
STANDARDS BOARD NOTIFICATION**

In accordance with the procedure adopted by the Standards Board for England, the Committee has been informed that the Board has decided not to take any further action in relation to allegations made against nine members of the Development Control Panel and three ordinary members of the Southoe and Midloe Parish Council but that it has referred to an Ethical Standards Officer, a complaint made against the Chairman and one other Member of Southoe and Midloe Parish Council.

15. APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATIONS

Under the Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) (Dispensations) Regulations 2002, the Committee has granted dispensations to speak but not vote to six members of the Twinning Sub-Committee of Huntingdon Town Council for the period ending 30th April 2007 to enable them to continue to participate in meetings of the Sub-Committee when matters relating to grant applications and budgetary functions relating to twinning arise.

P J Brant
Chairman