
Standards Committee

Report of the special meeting held on 6th June 2005

Matters for Information

1. **CODE FOR THE FUTURE – CONSULTATION PAPER ON THE REVIEW OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS**

In Item 14 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 13th April 2005, the Committee reported upon the commencement, by the Standards Board for England, of a consultation process to review the Members Code of Conduct. Before formulating their response to the consultation, the Committee wished to give all Members of the Council the opportunity to submit their views on possible changes to the code. A special meeting of the Committee has therefore been held to conclude the District Council's response by the deadline of 17th June, 2005.

Having endorsed suggested responses to a series of questions relating to key areas in the Code, the Committee has asked the Board to consider whether it should be compulsory for all newly elected Councillors to receive training on the Code of Conduct and ethical framework within a prescribed period of their election to office. Refusal to undertake training then could be regarded a breach of the Code. The Board also has been advised of the Committee's concerns regarding the continuing ability of a Councillor to remain in office pending an appeal hearing despite having been convicted and imprisoned for an offence. It was the Committee's view that in such circumstances the Member had brought his office and authority into disrepute and that imprisonment would prejudice a Member's ability to carry on his duties as a Councillor.

2. **ETHICAL STANDARDS – IN YOUR HANDS**

Further to Item No. 18 of their Report to the last meeting of the Council, the Committee has confirmed the attendance of their Chairman and Vice Chairman, Councillor J Taylor and Messrs D MacPherson and G Watkins at the fourth Annual Assembly of Standards Committees Conference to be held in Birmingham on 5th and 6th September 2005.

3. **ALLEGED BREACH OF CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Monitoring Officer has been authorised to convene a hearing, comprising Members of the Committee, to consider a report by an Investigating Officer with regard to an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct involving Members of Old Hurst Parish Council.

D H Bristow
Chairman