

PROPOSED TRAINING PROGRAMME
(Report by the Head of Legal & Democratic Services and
Monitoring Officer)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Notwithstanding recent changes to standards arrangements, the Committee's terms of reference have always prescribed that it give training and advice on matters relating to the Code of Conduct. The former Committee promoted the importance of training as a way to avoid complaints and save the time and resources which would need to be committed to investigations and hearings. This approach has generally been successful given that the Council has been required only to investigate ten cases since the inception of the ethical standards process under the Local Government Act 2000.
- 1.2 In view of the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in relation to standards and the requirement to adopt a new Code of Conduct and given the Regulations which followed on disclosable pecuniary interests, the Monitoring Officer considers it opportune to host a new programme of training for District Members and town and parish councils this Autumn.
- 1.3 The Committee may wish to note that recently elected District Councillors already have received Code of Conduct training by attending the new Members' induction course on 10th May 2012.

2. PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING

- 2.1 Although there still remains an opportunity for the Monitoring Officer to attend, when invited, individual town and parish council meetings, given the degree of the changes which have occurred recently it is proposed that arrangements be made for a more comprehensive programme to take place in the Autumn.
- 2.2 Experience suggests that locally based area sessions are better attended so it is proposed that the Chairmen and Clerks of town and parish councils be invited to attend one of four venues on dates to be arranged –
- Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon
One Leisure, St Ives;
Priory Centre, St. Neots; and
Amenity Centre, Yaxley.
- 2.3 District Councillors local to the venues also could take the opportunity to participate in the sessions.
- 2.4 In terms of training for District Councillors, it is proposed to run several drop-in sessions in advance of scheduled meetings of Panels/Committees as follows –

Monday 10th September: 6-7pm prior to ELSG (to which Members of the Cabinet and Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen of Overview and Scrutiny Panels are invited)

Tuesday 11th September: 6-7pm prior to Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being)

Monday 17th September: 6-7pm prior to Development Management Panel

Tuesday 2nd October: 6-7pm prior to Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)

3. PROPOSED PROGRAMME

3.1 It is suggested that the session should last approximately 60 minutes and comprise -

- ◆ a power point presentation by the Monitoring Officer – 30 minutes
- ◆ review of two/three case summaries in smaller groups – 15 minutes
- ◆ an opportunity for questions – 15 minutes

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The Committee is requested to endorse the proposed approach to training this Autumn.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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