

STANDARDS COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 4
13 JANUARY 2010	PUBLIC REPORT

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REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *That Committee members resolve to receive any future Deputy Monitoring Officers' reports in the standard format of this report*
2. *That the Committee members note the contents of this report*

CONTENTS OF REPORT

1. This report contains the following items for consideration:
 - Proposals for a standard Deputy Monitoring Officer's report
 - Update on minutes of last meeting
 - Report on any complaints made and progress on any investigations
 - Note items of interest issuing from Standards for England, Strategic Governance Board etc.
 - Progress against the work programme

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

2. ***Proposals for a model report***

2.1 All matters arising for this Committee have traditionally come in the format of a single report from the Monitoring Officer. It is proposed that in future a standard Monitoring Officer's report will deal with regulatory items and separate reports will be brought on specific items of interest to the Committee (e.g. as at this meeting with the Register of Interests item as a separate report). This would permit items of special interest to be referred to other bodies for consideration i.e. full Council or the Strategic Governance Board.

2.2 The regulatory items for this report are listed in paragraph 1.1 above although members of the Committee are invited to suggest any additional items they would wish to consider.

3. ***Update on minutes of last meeting***

3.1 ***Service standards:*** these standards have been amended in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee and the revised standards appear at appendix 1 to this report

3.2 ***CRB review checks:*** there are new requirements for persons engaging in regulated activity from 26 July 2010. Sector specific guidance was expected in December 2009 which may have indicated the impact of this legislation upon members but at the time of writing this report the Deputy Monitoring Officer was not aware that such guidance has been issued. It is suggested that this matter is the subject of a

separate report to the next meeting of the Committee following the issue of any relevant guidance.

- 3.3 *Local Democracy Week*: Planning for this week is to begin in January. Members are therefore invited to discuss suggestions for Local Democracy Week which the Deputy Monitoring Officer can then take forward and report back to the next meeting
- 3.4 *Training*: Members of the Standards Committee undertook training / promotion of the Standards Committee and the complaints process at each of the Neighbourhood Councils in December 09. It is suggested that those members report back verbally to the Committee on those events
- 3.5 *Training*: A further DVD (x2 copies) has been received from Standards for England entitled 'Assessment made clear'. It is suggested that members review the DVD and consider whether any further discussion or training is required arising out of this.
- 3.6 *Training*: At the last meeting it was agreed that training for members of the Council would be considered at the March 2010 meeting. It is suggested that an induction pack be prepared by the Deputy Monitoring Officer for consideration at the next meeting in preparation for the election of new members in May.
- 3.7 *Questionnaire for Councillors*: A verbal report will be given of the response to the questionnaire.
- 3.8 *Work programme*: The work programme was revised at the last meeting and an amended programme appears at Appendix 2.
- 3.9 *Work programme*: The Chairman and the Deputy Monitoring Officer met with a member of the Communications Team in December. The Chair will be invited to report back upon the Communications Plan arising from that meeting at Appendix 3.

4. *Complaints*

- 4.1 At the last meeting of the Standards Committee it was agreed that the Committee would receive regular updates on any complaints or matters referred for investigation. The complaint monitoring report is attached at Appendix 4.

5. *Items of interest*

- 5.1 The Strategic Governance Board met for the first time on the 19 November 2009. The meeting was chaired by the Monitoring Officer and the purpose of the meeting is to ensure good governance across the whole Council. (The report to this Committee's meeting on the 4 November set out the various functions of the Monitoring Officer in relation to governance). The agenda of the Board meeting is available at Appendix 5. Members of this Committee will note that an update on the work of this Committee was given at agenda item 5 and the Chair may wish to update members verbally at the meeting.
- 5.2 At the Extraordinary Council meeting on the 21 December, the Council resolved to go forward with the creation of a new Parish Council at Hampton Hargate and Hampton Vale. It is expected that the Reorganisation Order creating the new parish will be made in April 2010 and elections for the parish councillors will take place in May. There will be 14 new parish councillors in two new wards. Training for the new parish members will be required.

6. *Work programme*

- 6.1 Members are invited to discuss any additions or revisions to the work programme (at Appendix 2) if they have not already done so earlier in this meeting.

CONSULTATION

7. A copy of this report is sent to each parish council and they are invited to comment upon the contents. Any response from the parishes will be verbally reported to the Committee.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Service standards
- Appendix 2: Work programme
- Appendix 3: Communications plan 2010
- Appendix 4: Complaint monitoring report
- Appendix 5: Strategic Governance Board agenda

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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