NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

3 March 2008

Standards Committee Work Programme 2008

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider the Committee's future Work Programme.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 At each of its meetings, the Standards Committee reviews its programme of work. The current Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 and the Ethical Audit Action Plan is attached at Appendix 2, for ease of reference.

2.2 The Work Programme and Action Plan incorporate the core items which were required to meet the Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry.

3.0 WORK PROGRAMME

3.1 At its last meeting, the Committee agreed its Work Programme for 2008. The Work Programme is prepared on a rolling 12 month basis.

3.2 Members also requested that the Work Programme highlight those areas of work which had been completed. After reviewing the completed items, they could then be removed from the Programme. Completed items for the Committee's last meeting have been indicated and will be removed for the next meeting of the Committee.   The items to be reported back section has also been updated.

3.3 The entries for this meeting of the Committee have been amended in the following ways:

   a) to defer the item re Local filtering of complaints, as there have been no further developments since the Committee's last meeting. This area is mentioned briefly in the Complaints and Findings standing report.

   b) the item re Members' Attendance at Committees has been deferred to the Committee's June meeting to enable a full year's attendance figures to be provided to the Committee.

3.4 A similar process has been adopted in relation to the Ethical Audit Action Plan, in that completed items have been removed, leaving only those action points outstanding. A revised copy of the Action Plan is attached at Appendix 2 for Members' information. Many of the action points remaining are already covered in the forward Work Programme or Items to be reported back section. Updates on the remaining entries will be brought to subsequent meetings of the Committee.

3.5 Members are requested to consider the proposed Programme and whether they would wish to make any changes or include any other items.

4.0   RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1   That Members consider this report and review the Standards Committee's Work Programme.

CAROLE DUNN
Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Author of report: Moira Beighton
Telephone: 01609 532458
Room 15

Background Documents:
None

County Hall
NORTHALLERTON

20 February 2008

WORK PROGRAMME FOR STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 2008

MEETING	ITEM	REPORT REQUIRED	ETHICAL AUDIT ACTION PLAN REFERENCE	COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN REFERENCE	COMPLETED ?
14 January 08	Members' Register of Interests on Website.	Progress report.		Obj 1, Action 4	√
	SBE Case Review 2007	Information report.			√
	Review advice to officers and Members in relation to membership of Outside Bodies and potential conflicts	Suggested amendments to guidance document.			√
	Training	Progress report.			√
	Community Fund Allocation Dispensations	Update report.			√
	Citizen's Panel Questionnaire Results	Information report.			√
	Feedback from Independent Members' Forum	Information report.			√
	*Complaints and findings from the Standards Board	Standing report in relation to complaints relevant to NYCC, recent findings and developments nationally.		Obj 5	√ (ongoing)
	Work Programme for 2008	Setting out draft Programme for approval.			√
3 March 08	Officers' Code of Conduct and Register of Interests.	Progress report.		Obj 5, Action 1	

	New Protocol on Gifts and Hospitality	Setting out draft new Protocol for Committee's consideration.			
	Corporate Complaints and Compliments Report	Periodic report from Chief Executive's Unit.			
	*Complaints and findings from the Standards Board	Standing report.		Obj 5	√ (ongoing)
	Work Programme	Standing report.			
2 June 08	Annual Report of Standards Committee	Report presenting draft Annual Report, to be presented to meeting of County Council on 23 July 2008.			
	Local filtering of complaints *(deferred from March meeting)*	Update report re progress of legislation.			
	Members' Attendance at Committees *(deferred from March meeting)*	Periodic report from Head of Committee Services.			
	Council's statement re standards	Periodic update report as to use made of statement.			
	Statement re role of senior managers in ethical framework	Periodic update report as to use made of statement.			
	Council's ethical statement for stakeholders.	Progress report on how statement is being used.			
	CEO and Leader general ethics statement	Progress report on how statement is being used.			

	Committee's Communications Strategy	Review effectiveness of Strategy.			
	*Complaints and findings from the Standards Board	Standing report.		Obj 5	√ (ongoing)
	Work Programme	Standing report.			
1 September 08	Training Plan 2009	Setting out suggestions for training for next year.			
	Corporate Complaints and Compliments Report	Periodic report from Chief Executive's Unit.			
	Independent Member appointment 2009	To consider the position of the Chairman's term of office which will end in May 2009.			
	*Complaints and findings from the Standards Board	Standing report.		Obj 5	√ (ongoing)
	Work Programme	Standing report.			
10 November 2008	Feedback from Annual Assembly TRAINING SESSION				

Items to be reported back:

Item	Action Required	Current Progress	Report to which future meeting?	Completed?
Officers' Code of Conduct and Register of Interests.	Periodic update reports required.	Ongoing roll out of Register.		
Historical registration of Members' Interests forms – retention period.	To update Members after further consultation with other authorities and the Council's Data Protection Officer.	Consultation in hand.		
Council's statement re standards	Periodic update reports as to use required.			
Statement re role of senior managers in ethical framework	Periodic update reports as to use required.			
Statement for stakeholders	Periodic update reports as to use required.			
Standards Training (Members and Officers)	Periodic review of Training Plan and training delivered.	Next training to Members planned for 7 and 19 March 2008.		
Online standards documentation	Update standards information on NYCC website and intranet			
Monitor use of dispensations granted by Committee	Periodic reports to be submitted to the Committee.			
Citizens' Panel Questionnaire	Repeat exercise every few years.			
Standards Bulletin	Periodic Bulletins throughout the year.			

Action	Method		Who	Resources	By when	Outcomes	Evaluation	
What improvements need to be made		How will the action be achieved?	Who will take responsibility for action?	What resources are required to achieve improvement?	What is realistic?	What will change and improvement look and feel like?	How will success be monitored?	Work Programme (WP) Reference
B. Relationships								
4.	Raise awareness amongst Members and Officers of the roles of those involved in delivering the Ethical Framework	Information about the Standards Committee and MO roles will be readily available to officers	MO and Standards Committee	IT resource for Intranet availability	April 2007	Members and Officers will understand the respective roles	Repeat of Self Assessment Survey	As part of Communications Strategy and Training plan WP 12-01-07 and subsequent meetings
C. COMMUNICATION								
1.	Induction							
(a)	Review induction processes	New e-learning induction package will have a required element on the requirements of the officer code and the ethical framework	Monitoring Officer and	IT e-learning package needs to be up and running	September 2006	Staff will know of the requirement to complete register of interests, and will be aware of Standards Committee etc	Repeat of Self Assessment survey	WP 12-01-07 and subsequent meetings
(b)	Review recruitment documentation in relation to the requirement to complete the register of interests	Recruitment documentation will refer to the requirement to complete the register of officer interests where relevant	Asst Chief Executive (HR) and MO		April 2007	Recruitment documentation will refer to the requirement to complete the register of officer interests where relevant	Officers will proactively complete the register of interests	
(c)	Review Member induction processes	Asst Chief Executive (HR) will review induction process for Members	Asst Chief Executive (HR) and MO		April 2008	Member Induction processes will provide clear advice to New Members about	Repeat of Self Assessment Survey (with analysis for New Members)	

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Action	Method	Who	Resources	By when	Outcomes	Evaluation	
What improvements need to be made	How will the action be achieved?	Who will take responsibility for action?	What resources are required to achieve improvement?	What is realistic?	What will change and improvement look and feel like?	How will success be monitored?	Work Programme (WP) Reference
					the Ethical Framework for Members and Officers		
2. Training							
(a) Provide ethical training for key partners	Offer of appropriate training to key partnerships	MO and Standards Committee and Assistant CEX (Policy Perf and Pships)		April 2007	Greater awareness amongst partners on key ethical issues	Extension of Assessment Survey to key stakeholders	WP 12-01-07 and subsequent meetings
(b) Provide training to officers on Partnerships and the ethical issues arising	Provide specific ethics training on the officers code and other issues to officers	MO and Partnerships Wkg Gp		April 2007	Greater awareness of officers on partnerships	Repeat of Self Assessment Survey	WP 12-01-07 and subsequent meetings
(c) Review the effectiveness of existing Member training and attendance	Review existing training for Members including induction	MO and Asst Chief Executive HR and Group Leaders		April 2008	Members all receive some training. Member awareness is high	Repeat of Self Assessment Survey	
(d) Conduct a regular audit of training received by Members and Officers on ethical issues	Database of training received by Members and Senior Officers	MO and Member Development Unit		April 2007	A clear understanding of what training each Member and Officer has received	All Members and Officers have received training	
3. Electronic Information							
(a) Review material on Ethical issues and procedures on the Intranet for staff and Members **The Standards Cttee has agreed this**	Creation of Intranet site on ethical issues for staff	MO	IT support	April 2007	Intranet presence on ethics	Repeat of Self Assessment Survey	WP 19-03-07

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What improvements need to be made		How will the action be achieved?	Who will take responsibility for action?	What resources are required to achieve improvement?	What is realistic?	What will change and improvement look and feel like?	How will success be monitored?	Work Programme (WP) Reference
	should be considered early in 2007. It may be appropriate to include a link to the Standards Bulletin and also to Use Key Messages to disseminate information.							
(b)	Review the Internet site to include information on the Council's Ethical Framework *The Standards Cttee has agreed this should be considered early in 2007. It may be appropriate to include a link to the Standards Bulletin and also to Use Key Messages to disseminate information.*	Review current website to provide more information	MO	IT support	April 2007	Improvement Internet pages	Repeat of Self Assessment Survey	WP 19-03-07
(c)	Provide regular electronic updates to Senior Officers about the implementation and availability of information on policies and procedures	Regular bulletins to staff via email	MO	Support within legal services	December 2006	Regular bulletins	Repeat of Self Assessment Survey	WP 19-03-07
D. Accountability								
1.	Develop a review process which enables self analysis of decision making procedure	Procedure developed and followed	MO and Complaints Officers and Internal Auditor		April 2008	Process developed which is understood	Reduction in complaints	
2.	Examine ways of building accountability into statutory processes which appear to lack accountability	Review existing processes such as decision taking/ partnership documentation	MO and Head of Committee Services/partnership working group		April 2008	Clarity about who is responsible for decisions	Accountability	
E. MANAGEMENT OF STANDARDS								
1.	Develop clear guidance to officers and members on ethical issues in specific areas	Prepare specific guidance documents	MO and Standards Committee		Ongoing	Set of clear procedures for officers which are readily accessible	Repeat of surveys	

Action	Method		Who	Resources	By when	Outcomes	Evaluation	
What improvements need to be made		How will the action be achieved?	Who will take responsibility for action?	What resources are required to achieve improvement?	What is realistic?	What will change and improvement look and feel like?	How will success be monitored?	Work Programme (WP) Reference
3.	Review the effectiveness and availability of existing guidance to officers and members in relation to ethical issues	Review and raise awareness about existing guidance	MO and Standards Committee		April 2008	Set of clear procedures for officers which are readily accessible	Repeat of survey	WP 01-10-07
5.	Produce user friendly statement of the Council's stance on ethical issues and rules of conduct to provide to contractors and other stakeholders	Produce eyecatching leaflet to provide to those involved in contracting with the authority	MO and Standards Committee		July 2007	Contractors are fully aware of the consequences of inappropriate gifts or approaches	Survey of contractors and stakeholders	WP 04-06-07
F. TEAM WORKING AND CO-OPERATION								
1.	Provide joint training for officers and members on ethical issues	Provision of joint training sessions for officers and Members	MO and Standards Committee		April 2007	Greater awareness of officers of ethical issues	Repeat of Self Assessment Survey	WP 12-01-07 (Training Programme)
2.	Develop a clear statement about the interaction of complaints between officers and members	Procedure developed and made readily available	MO and Complaints Officers and Internal Auditor		September 2007	Complaints handled effectively	Complaints statistics	