

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

2 June 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 The entries for this meeting of the Committee have been amended by deferring the items re the use of the various standards statements until the September meeting, due to the lengthy report to this meeting regarding the Local Ethical Framework.
- 3.2 At its last meeting, the Committee agreed that the Ethical Audit Action Plan attached at Appendix 2 should no longer be brought to each Committee meeting, given that it feeds in to the Committee's Work Programme. The Action Plan was, however, to be brought to this meeting so that Members could consider the Plan in the light of the Annual report of the Committee. The Action Plan is also to be brought to the Committee at the end of each year for an annual check of issues contained within it.
- 3.3 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.

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Background Documents:
None

County Hall
NORTHALLERTON

21 May 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 | |

| MEETING | ITEM | REPORT REQUIRED | ETHICAL AUDIT ACTION PLAN REFERENCE | COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN REFERENCE | COMPLETED ? |
|-----------|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|----------------|
| | 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. | | | √ (ongoing) |
| | *Complaints and findings from the Standards Board | Standing report. | | Obj 5 | √ (ongoing) |
| | Work Programme | Standing report. | | | √ (ongoing) |
| 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 <i>(deferred from March meeting)</i> | Update report re progress of legislation. | | | √ (ongoing) |
| | Members' Attendance at Committees <i>(deferred from March meeting)</i> | Periodic report from Head of Committee Services. | | | √ (ongoing) |
| | Council's statement re standards <i>(deferred to September meeting)</i> | Periodic update report as to use made of statement. | | | |

| MEETING | ITEM | REPORT REQUIRED | ETHICAL AUDIT ACTION PLAN REFERENCE | COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN REFERENCE | COMPLETED ? |
|----------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|----------------|
| | Statement re role of senior managers in ethical framework <i>(deferred to September meeting)</i> | Periodic update report as to use made of statement. | | | |
| | Council's ethical statement for stakeholders. <i>(deferred to September meeting)</i> | Progress report on how statement is being used. | | | |
| | CEO and Leader general ethics statement <i>(deferred to September meeting)</i> | Progress report on how statement is being used. | | | |
| | Committee's Communications Strategy | Review effectiveness of Strategy. | | | √ (ongoing) |
| | *Complaints and findings from the Standards Board | Standing report. | | Obj 5 | √ (ongoing) |
| | Work Programme | Standing report. | | | √ (ongoing) |
| 1 September 08 | Training Plan 2009 | Setting out suggestions for training for next year and including attendance at recent standards training and results of training audit. | | | |

| MEETING | ITEM | REPORT REQUIRED | ETHICAL AUDIT ACTION PLAN REFERENCE | COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN REFERENCE | COMPLETED ? |
|---------|--|---|--|---|--|
| | Council's statement re standards <i>(deferred from June meeting)</i> | Periodic update report as to use made of statement. | | | Possibly include all agreed statements in an NY Times article? |
| | Statement re role of senior managers in ethical framework <i>(deferred from June meeting)</i> | Periodic update report as to use made of statement. | | | |
| | Council's ethical statement for stakeholders. <i>(deferred from June meeting)</i> | Progress report on how statement is being used. | | | |
| | CEO and Leader general ethics statement <i>(deferred from June meeting)</i> | Progress report on how statement is being used. | | | |
| | 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) |

| MEETING | ITEM | REPORT REQUIRED | ETHICAL AUDIT ACTION PLAN REFERENCE | COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN REFERENCE | COMPLETED ? |
|------------------|---|------------------|-------------------------------------|---|----------------|
| | Work Programme | Standing report. | | | √ (ongoing) |
| 10 November 2008 | Feedback from Annual Assembly TRAINING SESSION | | | | |

Items to be reported back:

| <u>Item</u> | <u>Action Required</u> | <u>Current Progress</u> | <u>Report to which future meeting?</u> | <u>Completed?</u> |
|---|--|-------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Officers' Code of Conduct and Register of Interests. | Periodic update reports required. | Ongoing roll out of Register. | | |
| New Protocol on Gifts and Hospitality | Progress report required. | | | |
| 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. | | | |

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|--|---|--|--|--|
| Statement for stakeholders | Periodic update reports as to use required. | | | |
| Standards Training (Members and Officers) | Periodic review of Training Plan and training delivered. | | | |
| 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. | | | |
| Annual Report of Standards Committee | Annually. | | | |
| Annual review of Ethical Audit Action Plan (end of year) | Annually. | | | |
| Members' Attendance at Committees | Periodic reports to be submitted to the Committee. | | | |
| Committee's Communications Strategy | Review periodically. | | | |
| Independent Member appointments | When required. | | | |
| 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) | |

| 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 | 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 |
| The Standards Cttee has agreed this | | | | | | | |

| 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 |
| | <i>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.</i> | | | | | | | |
| (b) | Review the Internet site to include information on the Council's Ethical Framework <i>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.</i> | 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 eye-catching 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 | |