

Central Bedfordshire
Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands,
Shefford SG17 5TQ



please ask for Martha Clampitt

direct line 0300 300 4032

date 6 May 2010

NOTICE OF MEETING

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Date & Time

Friday, 14 May 2010 9.30 a.m.

Venue at

Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the STANDARDS COMMITTEE :-

Councillors:	P Rawcliffe(Vice-Chairman), Mrs J G Lawrence, A A J Rogers, J Street and G Summerfield,
Independent Persons:	Mr J Dann, Mr K Ford, Mr K Frazer, Mr M Jones and Miss D C Maggs
Town and Parish Representatives:	Mr B Collier, Dr W J Eilbeck, Ms J Hughes, Mr J Lewis and Mr B Saunders

Other Members of the Council – as requested.

All other Members of the Council - on request

**MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS
MEETING**

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence and notification of substitute members.

2. **Election of Chairman for the Municipal Year 2010/11**

To elect a Chairman for the Municipal Year 2010/11.

(The Council agreed that one of the independent persons on the Committee should be appointed to the Office of Chairman.)

3. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2010/11.**

To appoint the Independent Co-optee Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2010/11.

4. **Minutes**

To approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 26 February 2010.

(previously circulated)

5. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members declarations and the **nature** thereof in relation to:-

- (a) Personal Interests in any Agenda item
- (b) Personal and Prejudicial Interests in any Agenda item

6. **Public Participation**

To deal with general questions and statements from members of the public in accordance with the scheme of public participation set out in Annex 1 to Part A4 of the Constitution.

7. Petitions

To receive Petitions in accordance with the scheme of public participation set out in Annex 2 to Part A4 of the Constitution.

REPORTS

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
8	Annual Report in respect of Governance Issues for the Municipal Year 2009/10 To receive the Annual Report on Standards activities during the year.	* 5 - 10
9	Bulletin No. 47 To draw to Members' attention the latest Bulletin issued by the Standards for England.	* 11 - 22
10	Notifications of Gifts and Hospitality declared by Central Bedfordshire Members To update the Committee on gifts and hospitality declared by Central Bedfordshire Councils Members from February to May 2010.	* 23 - 26
11	Update on Current Standards Matters To advise Members on the latest position relating Assessment, Reviews and Hearings.	* 27 - 30
12	"A Place for Standards" - Standards for England Assembly 18-19 October 2010 To bring to the attention of Members the date of the Annual Assembly of the Standards for England and to determine those attending the Conference.	* 31 - 32

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Meeting: Standards Committee
Date: May 2010
Subject: Annual Report in respect of Governance Issues for the Municipal Year 2009/10
Report of: Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Summary: To receive the Annual Report on Standards activities during the year.

Contact Officer: Barbara Morris, Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All Wards
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Financial:

None

Legal:

To ensure compliance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 and Part 10 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

Risk Management:

None

Staffing (including Trades Unions):
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None

Equalities/Human Rights:

Standards and Ethics inter relate with these areas and all issues are considered and taken into account as relevant.
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Community Safety:

None

Sustainability:

Promoting ethical standards amongst the community

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. that the Committee note the Annual Report and endorse its contents.**
- 2. that the Committee agree that the annual work plan as set out in Appendix A paragraph 6 to the report.**

1. Members will find attached at Appendix 'A' to this report a summary of the work carried out in respect of Ethical and Corporate Governance matters during the Municipal Year 2009/10. Members' attention is particularly drawn to the issues reported to Standards Committee and the training that has been delivered.
2. Members will recall that a work plan for the Municipal Year 2009/10 was developed. This Plan included training on Outside Bodies, Equalities and the Code of Conduct for Town and Parish Councils. All were delivered. In addition, a review of the Code of Conduct is expected later this year.
3. Members are also requested to consider the need for a Work Plan for the Municipal Year 2010/11.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Annual Report of Work Covered

Background Papers:

None

Location of papers:

N/A

Appendix 'A'

Annual Report of Standards Committee Work Covered for the Municipal Year 2009/10

Work Carried out by Standards Committee

July 2009

- Standards Bulletins Nos. 43 and 44
- Invitation to Join the Association of Independent Members of Standards Committees in England
- Update on Current Standards Matters
- The Standards Committee (further provisions)(England) Regulations 2009
- Review of Gift and Hospitality Code
- Review of Officer/Member Protocol
- Bringing Standards into Focus – Standards Board Conference 12 – 13 October 2009
- Exempt – Report of an Investigation under Section 59 of the Local Government Act 2000 by an Ethical Standards Officer into an allegation concerning a former member of Bedfordshire County Council and South Bedfordshire District Council.

November 2009

- Appointment of Town and Parish Members to the Central Bedfordshire Council's Standards Committee
- Notification of Gifts & Hospitality declared by Central Bedfordshire Members
- Standards Committee Article to be placed in Central Bedfordshire Council News Central Magazine
- Development of a Slogan for Standards – “Standards Matter”
- Review of Outside Bodies
- Update on Current Standards Matters
- Standards Bulletins No 45
- Bringing Standards into focus – Standards for England Assembly 12 – 13 October 2009
- Standards training for Central Bedfordshire Council and Town & Parish Members
- ‘Assessment made Clear’.

February 2010

- Presentation from the Chief Executive
- Verbal report from Independent Members' attendance at Committees and Town & Parish Meetings.
- Gift & Hospitality Audit
- Notifications of Gifts & Hospitality declared by Central Bedfordshire Members
- Update on Current Standards Matters
- Standard Board Bulletin No 46
- Guidance Notes issued by Standards for England
- Changes to the Adjudication Panel for England
- Planning Code Review

1. Information about Code of Conduct

The Member Code of Conduct has not been amended as expected since 2007. A review of the Code is expected later this year.

2. Statistical information about complaints received 1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010

All Initial assessments and reviews have been carried out within the prescribed 20 days period.

Initial Assessments Hearings

No further action – 7

For investigation – 8 (5 still under investigation and 1 Hearing scheduled for 30 April 2010)

Other Action – 1 (referred back from Standards for England) – letter of apology

Reviews Hearings

No further action -1

For investigation – 1

Other action -1

3. Information about length of time taken dealing with investigating complaints

Investigations have been carried out predominantly by an external investigator due to resourcing issues. They are taking approximately 3 months. The recommended time scale is within 6 months of an investigation being required.

4. Set out below is a summary of complaints which have led to investigation, sanction or other action

Investigation 1

- Using position improperly
- Failure to declare a prejudicial interest

Resulted in training

Investigation 2

- Bring office or authority into disrepute
- Using position improperly
- Failure to disclose personal /prejudicial interest at meeting

No further action

Investigation 3

- Failing to treat people with respect
- Bullying
- Bringing office into disrepute

No further action

Investigations currently being investigated:-

- Failing to treat people with respect
- Bullying any person
- Bringing your office into disrepute
- Improper use of his position

- Failing to treat people with respect
- Bullying any person
- Bringing your office into disrepute

- Accountability
- Openness
- Respect for others

- Bringing your office into disrepute

- Failing to treat others with respect
- Bullying and harassment
- Bringing your office into disrepute
- Failing to have regard to Code of Conduct

5. List of training delivered this year:-

16 June 2009 – Members How the Authority Operates

29 June 2009 – Members Code of Conduct

01 July 2009 – Members Standards Committee and Hearings

14 July 2009 – Town & Parish Council Code of Conduct

20 July 2009 – Town & Parish Council Code of Conduct

27 July 2009 – Town & Parish Council Code of Conduct

25 March 2010 – Town & Parish Council Equalities

27 April 2010 – Town & Parish Council Interests

6. It is suggested that a forward work plan for the Standards Committee 2010/11 could include the following:-

Delivery of Training

- Code of Conduct following review of code
- Any training identified by Beds T&PC Association for issues relating to Standards

Codes

- Review of Code of Conduct as appropriate

Annual Report

- Annual Report April 2011

Meeting: Standards Committee
Date: 14 May 2010
Subject: Standard Board Bulletin No 47
Report of: Monitoring Officer
Summary: To draw to Members' attention the latest Bulletin issued by the Standards for England.

Contact Officer: Mrs Barbara Morris, Assistant Director Legal & Democratic/Monitoring Officer Tel: 01462 611024

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Non-executive

Reason for urgency (if appropriate) N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Committee note the Standards for England Bulletin No 47.

Standards Board Bulletin

1. As Members are aware, the Standards for England regularly issue bulletins and updates for the Standards Committees to note. Attached at Appendix "A" to the report is a copy of the latest Bulletin No 47.
2. Members are requested to note the Bulletin and bring to the attention of the Committee any issues that they wish to discuss.
3. Members will also be aware that the Monitoring Officer arranges for copies of these Bulletins to go to all Town and Parish Councils and relevant officers within the Authority.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Contributes to all Council priorities to ensure good governance

Financial:

N/A

Legal:

To ensure that continued training and development is offered to ensure high ethical standards are maintained in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

Risk Management:

N/A

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

N/A

Equalities/Human Rights:

None

Community Development/Safety:

N/A

Sustainability:

N/A

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands



2010 Annual Assembly of Standards Committees ‘A place for standards’

Following the success of last year’s fully booked Annual Assembly, we are well on the way to finalising the programme for this year’s event, which takes place on 18 and 19 October at the ICC in Birmingham.

We are already working with a panel of standards committee members and monitoring officers to develop a range of sessions focused on sharing notable practice, developing high standards and building confidence in managing the local standards framework.

The cost of attending both days of the Assembly has been held at £430 (plus VAT) for the fourth year running, while a one-day place is £230 (plus VAT).

Online booking is now open on our website. We will also be sending out hard copy booking forms to all authorities from mid-March. Further information about the programme and speakers will be added to the website so keep checking back for the most up-to-date information.

Stakeholder Tracker 2009 – ‘A qualitative assessment of advice and guidance’

Every two years Standards for England (SfE) conducts a ‘stakeholder tracker’ in two parts: a quantitative survey, and a qualitative investigation. This research assesses the levels of satisfaction of members and officers in local government with the performance of SfE and their attitudes to the ethical environment. As some of you may recall, the survey was completed last summer. We are now happy to report that the qualitative section of the research, which provides a more in-depth analysis of some of the issues that emerged from the quantitative research, has been completed and is available on our website. **We would like to thank those of you who participated in the research. It is only through your continued support that we are able to track our progress, and identify areas for improvement.**

BMG research carried out this research by holding a number of focus groups with monitoring officers, standards committee members and parish councillors.

Some of the findings:

- The research found that monitoring officers and standards committee members are very positive about the local standards framework. They feel it has 'bedded in' well, and welcome the chance to take ownership of the process of investigating complaints.
- SfE's monitoring officer helpline received positive feedback, and some stakeholders suggested that the service callers receive has improved over the past 12 months.
- Monitoring officers welcome the development of peer and local/regional networks – however, there is some suggestion that a number of authorities may already have some form of networking in place. They would like SfE to provide content for delivery at networking events.
- The research identified several topics on which stakeholders think SfE could provide further guidance such as more information on other standards committee practices, sanctions and proportionality, mediation, guidance specifically for parish councillors, and more advice on the overlap with Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation.

A copy of the full report can be [downloaded here](#).

For further information, please contact:

Tom Bandenburg (Research Assistant) on 0161 817 5427 or email tom.bandenburg@standardsforengland.gov.uk

A REMINDER: Please send us your hearing decision notices

As you may already be aware, authorities are required to send Standards for England (SfE) copies of their hearing decision notices. The legal basis for this can be found in the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008 under regulation 20(1)(a). However, not all authorities have complied with this requirement.

Hearing decision notices provide a valuable source of information from which SfE can draw conclusions about how the local standards framework is functioning. We have decided to give greater emphasis to our analysis of the notices and we will share our conclusions with you.

What you need to do

Please send us a copy of the full decision notice for any determinations made by your Standards Committee. At the end of each quarter (from 1 April 2010) we will check whether we have received a decision notice for all the hearings completed that quarter and then contact authorities for any that are missing.

We prefer to receive decision notices as an email attachment in Word or PDF format if possible.

You can send them to authorityreturns@standardsforengland.gov.uk.

If you are unable to send them electronically, please post your decision notices to:

The Monitoring Team, Standards for England, 4th floor, Griffin House

40 Lever Street, Manchester M1 1BB

When writing the decision notices, please ensure that you include all the legal requirements set out in paragraph 20 of the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008. We also recommend that you refer to our guidance, which you can find in your local standards framework guide or online at

<http://www.standardsforengland.gov.uk/determinations>

Note: Please do not send us decision notices for any other type of decision such as initial assessments, reviews or consideration meetings. This is not a legal requirement and we will not be using them in our analysis.

What we will do

We will use the notices to help widen our knowledge of how the local standards framework is operating and provide some context to the quarterly returns data. The notices may also highlight areas where we can produce new guidance or improve on what we have already published.

Thank you for your co-operation. We will keep you informed of how the decision notices help us to support the local standards framework.

Adjudication Panel for England becomes known as First-tier Tribunal (Local Government Standards in England)

On the 18th January the functions of the Adjudication Panel for England were transferred to the First-tier Tribunal (Local Government Standards in England) and the Adjudication Panel for England was abolished. The First-tier Tribunal sits in the General Regulatory Chamber with Charity, Gambling, Information, Estate Agents, Claims Management, Consumer Credit and Transport Tribunals.

The role of the First-tier Tribunal is to hear cases referred to it by an Ethical Standards Officer or a Standards Committee following an investigation. The Tribunal will also hear appeals by a subject member against the decision of a Standards Committee.

There have been changes to the powers and procedures of the Tribunal.

Powers and Procedures

The First-tier Tribunal now has additional powers and procedures. It has the power to summon witnesses or require witnesses to produce documents relating to its hearings.

All Tribunal hearings can now be conducted either orally or by written representations with the consent of all parties.

Hearings can be conducted by less than 3 Tribunal members.

The President of the Adjudication Panel for England has been appointed as a Principle Judge of the First-tier Tribunal, legal members are now Judges and lay members are members.

Appeals

Previously any appeal from the Adjudication Panel was heard at the High Court. This process has now changed. Appeals will now be heard by the Upper Tribunal. The Upper Tribunal is an appellate tribunal created by the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007. The Administrative Appeals Chamber is the part of the Upper Tribunal which hears and decides appeals from decisions of the General Regulatory Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal.

Who can appeal to the Upper Tribunal?

Any party may appeal to the Administrative Appeals Chamber of the Upper Tribunal if they can show that the First-tier Tribunal made an error of law.

Additionally, the subject member has the right to appeal findings of fact, if their appeal is against

- (a) a decision that they failed to comply with a code of conduct,
- (b) a decision imposing suspension or another sanction

Appeals by other parties

A further change to the appeals process is that if a subject member is successful at the First-tier Tribunal, it is still possible for an Ethical Standards Officer or Standards Committee to appeal on a point of law to the Upper Tribunal. The First-tier Tribunal will notify the subject member if any of these parties wish to appeal.

Costs

The First-tier Tribunal now has the power to make an order for costs if the Tribunal considers that a party has acted unreasonably in bringing, defending or conducting the proceedings. It may make an order for costs following an application or on its own initiative.

This will mean that the Tribunal can award costs against a standards committee, Ethical Standards Officer or subject member if they have acted unreasonably in the conduct of their investigations or hearings. The First-tier Tribunal may also make an award for wasted costs incurred by any legal or other representative where the Tribunal considers that they have acted negligently, improperly or unreasonably in bringing, defending or conducting proceedings.

For more information and detailed guidance please see www.adjudicationpanel.tribunals.gov.uk

Our Risk Based Approach

One of the best practice requirements of a regulator is that they take a risk -based approach to their work: that is they are able to assess risks in their area of regulation and apply their own resources accordingly to keep risks low.

For Standards for England there are three types of risk which concern us.

- Systemic risk – risk which could lead to a widespread failing in the work of the framework or in standards across all authorities
- Sectoral risk – risk which could lead to a failing in standards in a number of similar authorities
- Entity risk – risk of a serious standards failure affecting one of the authorities covered by the local standards framework

Assessing entity, systemic or sectoral risks to standards or the success of the framework allows us to target our effort at those activities, situations or authorities that pose the biggest risk helping ensure we provide value for money.

The Success of the local standards framework relies in part on our ability to see potential pitfalls or risks to standards in advance. For example, the emergence of new technologies such as internet social networking, blogs and Twitter, have presented their own unique challenges to standards. During 2009-10 we were able to produce guidance, place articles in the local government press and give a presentation at a national members' conference on this subject.

Spotting such challenges allows us to provide early advice and guidance to the standards community to help prevent problems arising. We will be developing our approach to systemic and sectoral risk, closely linked to our research programme, to help us identify trends or potential problems, and so offer appropriate advice at the earliest opportunity.

We work closely with authorities where challenging standards issues emerge. Based on our increasing experience supporting these authorities we are developing our plans for managing entity risk.

We intend to prioritise the way we interact with authorities on the basis of our risk assessment of the likelihood and impact of any failure of standards in that authority. Working through our relationship managers we will take a differential approach based on this assessment to satisfy ourselves that authorities are working to minimise risks. We envisage working with 30-40 authorities at our highest level of contact and a further 100-120 at an intermediate level, at any one time.

Typically authorities at the lowest level of risk will be in contact with us only as they go about their routine business in operating the standards framework and sending back the required monitoring data, whereas authorities at the intermediate level might be contacted by relationship managers on a six monthly basis, and those at the highest level contacted or visited more frequently as deemed appropriate.

We will be testing our planned approach and consulting with the regulated community about it over the next six months.

Social networking: an effective medium of communication but not without risk

When it comes to reaching certain groups quickly, cheaply and maintaining control over your message, many councillors find online methods hard to beat.

At the recent Cllr' 10 event, Standards for England and the IDeA ran an interactive session which looked at how councillors can use social networking effectively and ethically to engage with their local communities.

This article highlights some of the key messages from the session for councillors.

- If you use blogs, Facebook or Twitter to help you to carry out your political work, rather than in your private capacity, your obligation to meet certain standards of conduct still applies. You can still be involved in robust political debate and state your opinions strongly – the Code does not exist to gag you or fellow councillors or stop you expressing political views. It does, however, prohibit treating others with disrespect, bullying and bringing one's office or authority into disrepute. It is important if you are blogging or tweeting personally and not in your role as councillor, that you do not act, claim to act, or give the impression that you are acting as a representative of your Authority. It is worth noting that web links to official council websites may give or reinforce the impression that you are representing the council.

- You may use a blog to draw attention to a particular local issue and call the council to account, as you would in a public meeting. However, blog entries ridiculing or attacking particular officers, or making serious accusations about their personal competence or integrity, could amount to disrespect, even bullying, in some circumstances.
- It is worth considering that while the immediacy of social media can be a great benefit, it also has a downside. For example, it is possible for you to Tweet on a matter seconds after leaving the council chamber – long before your opponents have issued press statements. This can result in broadcasting spontaneous remarks that may quickly seem unwise. By the time you have reconsidered and deleted them, they may have been seen by thousands, Facebook-shared, re-Tweeted, linked to, and committed to local headlines. That is fine, if you have got this message across just how you wanted to; less so if your post was an outburst in the heat of the moment. Such remarks are easily withdrawn, apologised for and forgotten when made in person, but posting them on the internet means that they have been published, and in a way that cannot be contained.
- It is important to note that good ethical standards are not limited to the Code of Conduct. While you may not be investigated for using online media, your conduct can still attract adverse publicity, even where the Code does not apply. For example, a regional newspaper recently called a councillor's blog post against a rival party a "toilet-mouthed tirade" saying:

"A [Code] breach it may not have been; childish, crude and demeaning to all who vote or follow politics it certainly was."

It is clear that social networking sites can enhance political debate and add positively to local politics when used correctly. [Click here](#) to see our online guide to blogging.

New Online Guides on Our Website

The Guidance and Information team has produced several new online guides at the end of 2009. They are now available on our website. Here are the titles and links to the guides:

- [Charitable Trustees and declarations of interest under the Code](#)
- [Freemasons and the Code](#)
- [Independent members](#)
- [Notifications to parish and town councils concerning complaints about their members and the Standards](#)
- [Role and appointment of parish and town council reps to the standards committee](#)
- [Blogging quick guide](#)

We hope you find these new pieces of guidance helpful. Please e-mail any feedback you have on our guidance to enquiries@standardsforengland.gov.uk

Standards Committees can take a lead from ‘notable practice’

Research into ‘notable practice’, was carried out jointly by Hull University and the University of Teesside and was finalised in October 2009. It is called ‘notable practice’ to highlight the fact that the tips for success are examples of where particular approaches have worked in certain authorities, rather than ‘set-in-stone’ rules about what should be done.

Bristol City Council standards committee was identified as being particularly effective at facilitating organisational learning, sharing learning with the local government community and acting as hub for other authorities and independent members in the South West. The focus of the case study in South Cambridgeshire was on the standards committee’s proactive approach to the recruitment and retention of independent members.

The research identified nine examples of notable practice in different authorities. Below is the list of the notable practice examples and the case study authorities.

Notable practice	Case study authority
Organisational learning	Bristol City Council
Working with town and parish councils	Taunton Deane Borough Council
Member development	Surrey Police Authority
Working with partnerships	Newark and Sherwood District Council
Recruitment and retention	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Training and development	Herefordshire County Council
Joint standards and audit committees	Runnymede Borough Council
High pressure investigations	Greater London Author
Embedding standards	Newcastle City Coun

Standards committees can now access these case studies, examine details of the notable practice, and benefit from key learning points. The research, 'Assessing the Impact of Standards Committees 2009', can be found at

www.standardsforengland.gov.uk/Resources/Research/2009reports/

Further information

For further information on this paper or any other work undertaken by the Research Team, please contact **Hannah Pearson (Research and Projects Adviser)**, email: hannah.pearson@standardsforengland.gov.uk , ext: 5417

Impartial and Objective Investigators

Standards committees must ensure that they appoint investigators who have the necessary impartiality to conduct investigations with no perception of bias. This principle of impartiality should be applied to external and internal investigators alike. It is important that any external investigators are and appear to be impartial; a characteristic which should form part of any selection criteria applied when choosing one.

One of the key benefits of reciprocal arrangements with other authorities is that they enable authorities to pass investigations involving their own employees to another council. It is the monitoring officer's responsibility to ensure they select an impartial investigator.

Have your say

Has your authority or standards committee developed an innovative way of promoting ethical behaviour or delivering the standards framework? Why not share your ideas with over 1,000 other council officers and standards committee members on the Standards Forum?

You can use the Forum to discuss anything you find topical in this Bulletin with fellow council officers or standards committee members. It provides a place to network, ask questions, share good practice and make recommendations.

There are currently over 100 posts on more than 40 different topics. Popular topics include:

- Dealing with vexatious complaints
- Developing protocols for informing members
- Promoting ethical behaviour

To have your say, visit:

www.standardsforengland.gov.uk/resources/TheStandardsForum/

If you are a member of a standards committee, a monitoring officer or a relevant officer and you are not currently registered for the forum or have any questions please email: forum@standardsforengland.gov.uk

Delay on the New Code of Conduct

As you may be aware a new Code of Conduct for Members will not be laid during this Parliamentary session. Communities and Local Government have notified us that the Government is concentrating on financial instruments and so there will not be Parliamentary time available for the Code.

In practice this means that a new Code will not now be laid until after a general election.

Meeting: Standards Committee
Date: 14 May 2010
Subject: Notifications of Gifts and Hospitality declared by Central Bedfordshire Members
Report of: Monitoring Officer
Summary: To update the Committee on gifts and hospitality declared by Central Bedfordshire Councils Members from February to May 2010

Contact Officer: Mrs Barbara Morris, Assistant Director Legal & Democratic/Monitoring Officer
Tel: 01462 611028

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Non-executive

Reason for urgency (if appropriate) N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Committee notes the declarations of gifts and hospitality received by Central Bedfordshire Members as set out at Appendix "A" to this report.

1. Attached at Appendix "A" to this report Members will find a summary of gifts and hospitality declared by Central Bedfordshire Council Members as requested by the Committee at their last meeting.
2. Members are aware that their declarations are held in the public domain and their interests declarations are a requirement of the Code of Conduct.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Contributes to all Council priorities to ensure good governance

Financial:

N/A

Legal:

To ensure declarations are made in accordance with the Code of Conduct are maintained and disclosed in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

Risk Management:

N/A

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

N/A

Equalities/Human Rights:

None

Community Development/Safety:

N/A

Sustainability:

N/A

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands

Appendix "A"

**Declarations notified to the Monitoring Officer
in respect of Gifts and Hospitality received by
Central Bedfordshire Members**

Date of gift or hospitality	Description of gift/ hospitality	Date notified to Monitoring Officer
10 March 2010	Attendance on BT Vital Vision Thought Leadership programme for 2010	8 April 2010
24 March 2010	LGC Awards Dinner – invitation from the National RIEP Programme	8 April 2010

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Meeting: Standards Committee
Date: 14 May 2010
Subject: Update on Current Standard Matters
Report of: Monitoring Officer
Summary: To advise Members on the latest position relating Assessment, Reviews and Hearings

Contact Officer: Mrs Barbara Morris, Assistant Director Legal & Democratic/Monitoring Officer
Tel: 01462 611024

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Non-executive

Reason for urgency (if appropriate) N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee receive and note the report.

1. Further to the meeting held on 17 July 2009, the report set out at Appendix "A" shows the current position relating to code of conduct cases, together with information about any further complaints received by the Standards Committee.
2. Members are requested to receive and note this report.
3. Additionally, at Appendix "B", as requested by Members at their last meeting, a table setting out the numbers of matters dealt with by individual Members is attached for information.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Contributes to all Council priorities to ensure good governance

Financial:

N/A

Legal:

To ensure high ethical conduct within the Council in accordance with the requirements of the Ethical Framework as set out in the Local Government Act 2000

Risk Management:

N/A

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

N/A

Equalities/Human Rights:

None

Community Development/Safety:

N/A

Sustainability:

N/A

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands

Central Bedfordshire Council Standards Committee Matters

Case Ref No	Type of Hearing	Town/Parish Council or CBC Member	Date	Outcome
CBC7	A	Town Council and CBC	6 November 2009	No further action
CBC5	A	CBC	20 November 2009	Referred for other action to the Monitoring Officer
CBC8	A	Parish Council	7 December 2009	Referred for Investigation Hearing held on 30 April 2010 – no breach
CBC9	A	Town Council as well as CBC	11 December 2009	Referred for Investigation Hearing set for 27 May 2010
CBC10	A	Town Council	22 January 2010	Referred for Investigation
SC5	H	Town Council	9 February 2010	No Breach under Code paragraph 6(a) – using position improperly Breach under Code paragraph 12 – failure to declare a prejudicial interest Sanction – Training
CBC11	A	CBC	18 February 2010	Referred for Investigation
CBC12	A	CBC	18 February 2010	Referred for Investigation
CBC13	A	CBC	18 February 2010	Referred for Investigation
CBC14	A	Town Council	26 March 2010	No further action

Assessment (A)
Review (R)
Hearing (H)

List of Members undertaking Sub-Committee (Initial Assessments), Reviews and Pre-Hearings and Hearings

		Initial Assessments	Reviews	Pre-Hearing	Hearing
Independent Member	Mr K Ford	4	1		1
	Miss D Maggs	6			1
	Mr J Dann	5	1		
	Mr K Frazer	1	1		1*
	Mr M Jones	4			1 + *
Elected Member	P Rawcliffe	2			2
	Mrs J G Lawrence	3			1
	A A J Rogers	7			1
	J Street	3	2		2*
	G Summerfield	2			
Town/Parish Member	Mr B Collier	8			1
	Dr W J Eilbeck	6	1		1 + *
	Ms J Hughes	1	1		1*
	Mr J Lewis apart from	3 (2 cases as an elected member for Shadow Council)			
	Mr B Saunders (newly appointed)				1* (observer) + 1

* Hearing could have occurred but not required as Investigator's report accepted. No Action.

as at May 2010

Meeting: Standards Committee
Date: 14 May 2010
Subject: “A Place for Standards” – Standards for England Assembly 18-19 October 2010
Report of: Monitoring Officer
Summary: To bring to the attention of Members the date of the Annual Assembly of the Standards for England and to determine those attending the Conference.

Contact Officer: Mrs Barbara Morris, Assistant Director Legal & Democratic/Monitoring Officer
Tel: 01462 611024

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Non-executive

Reason for urgency (if appropriate) N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. That the Committee determine attendance at the Standards for England Annual Assembly on 18 and 19 October 2010.**

“A Place for Standards”

1. Members will be aware that the Standards for England hold an Annual Assembly relating to standard matters. This year’s Assembly is entitled “A Place for Standards” and will be held on 18 and 19 October 2010 at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham.
2. Further details of the Assembly will be available in due course.
3. The Monitoring Officer has reserved 2 places at the Conference and it is suggested that a Member, together with the Monitoring Officer or her representative be authorised to attend.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Contributes to all Council priorities to ensure good governance

Financial:

£1,080 plus VAT for the two delegates including overnight accommodation for one night.

Legal:

To ensure that continued training and development is offered to ensure high ethical standards are maintained in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

Risk Management:

N/A

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

N/A

Equalities/Human Rights:

None

Community Development/Safety:

N/A

Sustainability:

N/A

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands