
Meeting: Standards Committee
Date: 6 November 2009
Subject: Standards Committee Article to be placed in Central Bedfordshire Council News Central Magazine
Report of: Monitoring Officer
Summary: To approve the wording of an article to be published in the Council's News Central Magazine which is delivered to every household in the area.

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

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Contributes to all Council priorities to ensure good governance

Financial:

N/A

Legal:

To ensure that the profile of the Standards Committee is raised, in particular their role 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

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee make comments/amendments and approve the article at Appendix "A" to the report which will be published in the Council's News Central Magazine.

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1. In order to raise the profile of standards in Central Bedfordshire it is suggested that an article be placed in the Council's magazine, News Central, which is circulated to all households in Central Bedfordshire.
 2. Attached at Appendix "A" to this report is a suggested article. It is recommended that the adopted slogan discussed elsewhere on this Agenda be used as a strap line in the article.

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands

Slogan “ “

Did you know the Council has a Standards Committee?

The Standards Committee at Central Bedfordshire Council is made up of five elected Members, five Independent Members of the public and five Town and Parish representatives.

The role of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst Councillors, but it also has more diverse functions including ensuring that:-

- The Council adopts and revises that Code
- Members sign up to observe the Members’ Code of Conduct
- The Code is monitored via a complaint system
- Training is delivered to Councillors on ethical standards
- Dispensations are granted to Councillors and Co-opted Members from the requirements relating to interest set out in the Code in specific circumstances
- All Town and Parish Council matters relating to breaches of the Code of Conduct are investigated by the Monitoring Officer via the Standards Committee.

The Standards Committee has an essential job to do in maintaining a sound ethical environment in which the Council can operate. It is challenging but to assist them in this function is the Council’s Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer’s duties include ensuring that lawfulness and fairness of decision making occurs. The Monitoring Officer is also required to investigate and prepare reports upon which the Standards Committee will determine whether or not a Member of the Council or a Town/Parish Council has breached the Members’ Code of Conduct.

There are numerous sanctions that the Standards Committee can impose upon a Councillor who breaches the Code and these include requiring that the Member submit a written apology; suspending or partially suspending a Councillor for a period of up to six months from their duties; or requiring that Councillors undertake such training or conciliation as may be specified.

The Standards Committee is there to ensure that high standards of ethical conduct are maintained within Central Bedfordshire Council and the Town and Parish Councils.