

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

19 APRIL 2012

REPORT OF
CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM

COUNCIL DECISION/

Corporate Management and Finance – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Harrington

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 2011/2012

1. Summary

This report provides Cabinet with the opportunity to consider the Standards Committee's Annual Report for 2011/2012, which will be presented by the Chair and/or Vice-Chair of the Committee and the Monitoring Officer, and to recommend it to the Council for approval.

2. Recommendations

That the Standards Committee's Annual Report be considered and recommended to the Council for approval.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

To ensure that the duties and responsibilities of the Standards Committee, and its work during the past year in connection with the authority's corporate/ethical governance, is brought to the attention of all Members and to as wide a cross-section of Officers as possible.

4. Members Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

COUNCIL DECISION

Corporate Management and Finance – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Harrington

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 2011/2012

SUMMARY

This report provides Cabinet with the opportunity to consider the Standards Committee's Annual Report for 2011/12, which will be presented by the Chair and/or Vice-Chair of the Committee and the Monitoring Officer, and to recommend it to the Council for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standards Committee's Annual Report be considered and recommended to the Council for approval.

DETAIL

1. Reports on performance are an important part of the Council's monitoring, reporting and planning procedures.
2. Attached as an **Appendix** is the Standards Committee's Annual Report for 2011/12
3. The Report provides an overview of the work of the Committee in the past year. It sets out the Committee's main Statutory responsibilities, and summarises how they have been discharged. The Report has been prepared in the context of the significant changes proposed to the national and local standards regime, as set out in the Localism Act. These changes are anticipated to become effective from 1 July onwards.
4. Cabinet is asked to consider the Report, provide any comments it wishes to make on its content and to recommend it to full Council for acceptance.
5. Consultation on the Report has previously taken place with Group Leaders and the relevant Cabinet Member; the Head of Legal Services as Deputy Monitoring Officer; the Head of Democratic Services; the Corporate Governance Group and the Corporate Management Team. The report has also been circulated to Audit Committee Members. Once agreed the Report will be placed on the intranet and the internet for the attention of all Members/Officers and will be made available to Town/Parish Councils.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial

6. None specified as a result of this report.

Legal

7. Similarly, none arising directly from this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

8. Matters identified in the Annual Report are assessed separately. This report is a low risk category.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

9. Effective corporate and ethical governance is critical to an authority's performance and to demonstrating continuous improvement. Probity and high standards are an inherent part of corporate/ethical governance, Law and Democracy's Service Plan and the Council Plan. This will continue to be the case even after the Localism Act's proposals have been implemented. The Annual Report and the work of the Standards Committee are concerned with such governance in all of its aspects.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10. The Annual Report has not been subject to an assessment. The Report reflects what has occurred during 2011/12.

CONSULTATION

11. The Annual Report has been produced in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, by and on behalf of the Committee itself, and as specified in paragraph 5 of the Cabinet report.

Director of Law & Democracy

Contact Officer: David E Bond
Telephone No: 01642 527061
E-mail: david.bond@stockton.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Property Implications:

The Annual Report attached

Not Ward specific

None