

## Standards Committee

A meeting of Standards Committee was held on Friday, 15th June, 2007.

**Present:** Mr F W Hayes (Chairman), Cllr Andrew Sherris (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr John Fletcher, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Mr L W Hedley (Parish Representative), Mrs F Robinson (Independent Member).

**Officers:** D Bond, S Johnson (LD).

**Also in attendance:** No other persons in attendance.

**Apologies:** Mr T Bowman (Parish Representative), Mrs E Chapman (Independent Member).

### **S A Revised Model Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members**

**1/07**

Members were presented with a report that provided further information regarding the proposed new model code of conduct, which was made by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 2 April, 2007 and which came into force on 3 May 2007.

The Committee considered the new Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 at its meeting on 26 April 2007. The Committee made recommendations to Council following a discussion of the new Model Code. The recommendations were as follows:

1. At the earliest opportunity, the Council adopts with immediate effect the code of conduct for members prescribed in the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 ("the 2007 Order"), in its entirety, in place of the Council's existing code of conduct for members, together with the general principles of conduct as an unenforceable preamble.
2. A copy of the adopted code of conduct be provided to every member of the Council.
3. All Town/Parish Councils be advised to adopt as soon as reasonably possible, the code of conduct for Members prescribed in the 2007 Order, but excluding those provisions which are not mandatory for parish councils save for paragraph 12 (2) (in part), in place of their existing codes of conduct for members; and that
4. As soon as practicable, training for the Council's Members and for Town/Parish Council Members is provided, and that such training is treated as compulsory (in the case of Town/Parish Council Members, with the agreement of their Councils), with its take-up by each member being monitored and reported on by the Committee; and
5. A further report be submitted to the Committee when the Standards Board's proposed guidance on the new Model Code of Conduct and related matters becomes available.

The Monitoring Officer advised that the wording of recommendation 4 had changed slightly from that proposed at the meeting on 26th April and asked the Committee to consider the amended wording.

Members of the Committee were advised that since the meeting on 26th April 2007, the Standards Board had issued a code of conduct guide for members, the code of conduct pocket guide and Bulletin 33 which contained details about the new code. The Committee were presented with copies of the documents. The Committee were also presented with copies of the Revised Code of Conduct presentation slides produced by the Standards Board for England at a recent roadshow event.

The Committee discussed the main changes in the proposed new Model Code of Conduct and also the parts that remained unchanged. The Committee discussed personal interests and agreed that the provision relating to 'close associates' should be highlighted to Cabinet/Council as one area where there might be particular difficulties in terms of definition and application in practice.

RECOMMENDED that:

1. The provision relating to personal interests and 'close associates' in the proposed new model Code of Conduct be highlighted specifically to Cabinet/Council.
2. The suggested amended wording of recommendation 4 be approved.

**S**  
**2/07**

#### **Hearing - Work Through**

The Chairman requested that the Committee defer consideration of the above item to a future meeting.

AGREED that the Hearing Work Through be deferred to a future meeting.