

Leicester
City Council

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

DATE: WEDNESDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2011

TIME: 5.30 PM

PLACE: FOUNTAIN ROOM, GROUND FLOOR, TOWN HALL

Members of the Committee

Councillors Naylor, Osman, Porter, Thomas, Westley and Willmott

Mrs Sheila Brucciani (Independent Member) (Chair)

Ms Kate McLeod (Independent Member)

Ms Mary Ray (Independent Member)

Members of the Committee are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed overleaf.

for Director of Corporate Governance

Officer contact: Heather Kent
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INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND MEETINGS

You have the right to attend Cabinet to hear decisions being made. You can also attend Committees, as well as meetings of the full Council. Tweeting in formal Council meetings is fine as long as it does not disrupt the meeting. There are procedures for you to ask questions and make representations to Scrutiny Committees, Community Meetings and Council. Please contact Democratic Support, as detailed below for further guidance on this.

You also have the right to see copies of agendas and minutes. Agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website at www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk or by contacting us as detailed below.

Dates of meetings are available at the Customer Service Centre, King Street, Town Hall Reception and on the Website.

There are certain occasions when the Council's meetings may need to discuss issues in private session. The reasons for dealing with matters in private session are set down in law.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

Meetings are held at the Town Hall. The Meeting rooms are all accessible to wheelchair users. Wheelchair access to the Town Hall is from Horsefair Street (Take the lift to the ground floor and go straight ahead to main reception).

BRAILLE/AUDIO TAPE/TRANSLATION

If there are any particular reports that you would like translating or providing on audio tape, the Democratic Services Officer can organise this for you (production times will depend upon equipment/facility availability).

INDUCTION LOOPS

There are induction loop facilities in meeting rooms. Please speak to the Democratic Services Officer at the meeting if you wish to use this facility or contact them as detailed below.

General Enquiries - if you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact Heather Kent, Democratic Support on (0116) 229 8816 or email heather.kent@leicester.gov.uk or call in at the Town Hall.

Press Enquiries - please phone the Communications Unit on 252 6081

PUBLIC SESSION

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in the business on the agenda, and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applies to them.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee, held on 14 July 2011, have been previously circulated and Members are asked to confirm that they are correct.

4. DISCUSSION WITH THE LORD MAYOR

The Lord Mayor has been invited to the meeting to discuss with Members issues of standards and ethics, particularly at Council meetings.

5. THE FUTURE OF THE STANDARDS FRAMEWORK IN [Appendix A](#) LEICESTER

The Monitoring Officer submits a report that informs discussions of the Standards Committee on the future of the Standards framework in Leicester, pending the coming into force of the Localism Bill. Members are recommended to consider and comment on the briefing note attached to the report and rationale for a new local code set out.

6. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT [Appendix B](#)

The Chair submits a report that informs Council of the activities of the Standards Committee for the municipal year 2010-11. The Standards Committee is recommended to consider the draft report and make comments as it sees fit prior to its submission to Council.

7. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

The Chair asks the Committee to consider and discuss matters of disclosure of information that is discussed in private meetings.

8. SOCIAL NETWORKING [Appendix C](#)

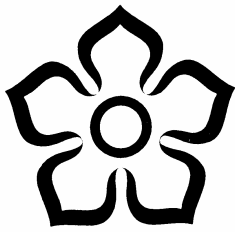
Following previous discussions at the Standards Committee, Members are recommended to nominate a member to lead on liaising with officers to update social networking guidance for all elected members. The current guidance on protecting your e-identity is attached for information.

9. WORK PROGRAMME

Appendix D

The Monitoring Officer submits a work programme for the Standards Committee. Members are asked to note the work programme and amend as they see fit.

10. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS



Leicester
City Council

Appendix A

Standards Committee

7 September 2011

The future of the Standards framework in Leicester

Report of the Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose of report

To inform discussions of the Standards Committee on the future of the Standards framework in Leicester, pending the coming into force of the Localism Bill.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Standards Committee considers and comments on the briefing note attached and rationale for a new local code set out.

3. Report

3.1 A local code and how to “police” it?

- 3.2 At the request of the Standards Committee which had an initial discussion about a local code of conduct for Leicester at its last meeting, I met with two of the three independent members of the Committee and considered the attached briefing note (appendix 1). Our discussions included what might be included in a local code, who would “police” it and how it might be enforced?

Our discussions suggested that one approach was to amend and update the Political Conventions (appendix 2) but to add some of the aspects of the current Code of Conduct (appendix 4). This together could form the basis of a new code. I have set out the choices the Committee could consider to amend the Political Conventions at appendix 5 and to include from the Code of Conduct at appendix 6.

We discussed the inclusion of the City Mayor in such a local code. We also discussed the benefit of having an increased number of independent members on any future committee to counter balance a large ruling party and also a City Mayor with increased powers compared to the previous Leader. This predated some research I undertook that suggests the inclusion of

independent members in the future would have to be as co-opted non-voting members.

3.3 The law

The Localism Bill which is making its way through Parliament is anticipated to become law in the autumn. The Bill following debate and amendment retains the following proposals:

- to abolish “Standards for England” the national body that oversees the current standards regime.
- to abolish the legislation relating to standards committees and the local assessment of complaints.
- Giving the choice to Councils to adopt a local code of conduct or not as they see fit.
- A general duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members.
- A new criminal offence regarding the declaration of financial interests will be introduced.

Before 2000 when standards committees were put on a statutory footing there were some attempts to monitor member behaviour through standards committees which were tested in the courts. It would be worth bearing these cases in mind.

They suggest that a standards committee can investigate conduct, name and shame a councillor, propose removal from a committee but that any restrictions must be proportionate. These provisions would need to accord with natural justice.

3.4 Rationale for having a new local code

Councillors have indicated that they wish to retain some form of local code and that wish has been repeated by this Committee. Some of the additional reasons for having a local code include:

- The statutory duty the Council will have to maintain standards
- The council’s liability for the action of its members
- To counter the risk of reputational damage
- A counter balance to an increasingly powerful City Mayor
- A counter balance to a large ruling group

3.10 What other factors ought to be considered and further research

Any new Standards Committee would be a non-executive committee of the Council. Under current constitutional and legal rules it would be made up of Councillors. Any “independent”/non councillors members would be co-opted non-voting members. It could be chaired by an “independent” chair.

The sanctions that could be imposed are likely to be limited to:

- “Naming and shaming”
- Suspension from a committee for a limited and proportionate time

It has been suggested that since the new code is envisaged to include the City Mayor, given that he was directly elected by the people of Leicester, they should be consulted on the development of the new code.

1. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

1.1. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this discussion report.
Steve Charlesworth, Head of Finance (Financial control)

1.2. Legal Implications

There are no additional legal implications other than those highlighted in the report.

Perry Holmes, Director of Corporate Governance

1.3. Climate Change Implications

This report does not contain any significant climate change implications and therefore should not have a detrimental effect on the Council’s climate change targets.

Helen Lansdown, Senior Environmental Consultant - Sustainable Procurement

2. Other Implications

| OTHER IMPLICATIONS | YES/ NO | Paragraph/References Within the Report |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Equal Opportunities | N | |
| Policy | N | |
| Sustainable and Environmental | N | |
| Crime and Disorder | N | |
| Human Rights Act | N | |
| Elderly/People on Low Income | N | |
| Corporate Parenting | N | |

| | | |
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| Health Inequalities Impact | N | |
|----------------------------|---|--|

3. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

The political conventions – contained in the Constitution

The Code of Conduct for members – contained in the Constitution

R v Portsmouth City Council ex parte Gregory (1990) 2 Admin L.R. 681

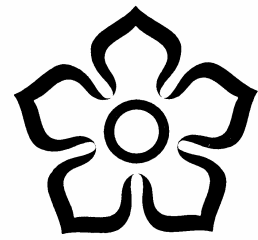
Lashley, R (on the application of) v Broadland District Council (2001) EXCA Civ 179

4. Report Author

Perry Holmes

Monitoring Officer.

Appendix 1



Leicester
City Council

BRIEFING NOTE

Possible approaches to drafting proposals for the future of Standards

The Standards Committee has asked for proposals to be brought forward for the future of a Standards framework at Leicester if, as expected, the Localism Bill when enacted abolished the current framework.

Options for a “new rulebook”

1. Adopt an amended/updates version of the Political Conventions

Advantages – mature code, certain amount of councillor buy in, already applies to the City Mayor,

Disadvantages – not new, could be seen as too Leicester centric, currently has not real teeth, misses some of the parts that councillors might want including from the Code of Conduct.

2. Write a new “Code of Conduct for Leicester Councillors in addition to the Political Conventions

Advantages – fills the gaps that the PC leaves include some of current Code features, new – would be seen to include the new councillors with no knowledge in the PC

Disadvantages – additional burden on councillors

3. No local Code just the current Political conventions

Advantages – less burdensome on elected councillors, just the criminal offences around declaration of financial interests and the group discipline of the Political Conventions.

Disadvantages – no accountability of City Mayor for complaints about conduct, contrary to commitment expressed by the previous Council and the City Mayor about having appropriate measures in place building on the work of the Standards Committee.

4. Adopt the Political Conventions and add some of the current Code features

Advantages – accountability for all Councillors and the Mayor, builds on the mature conventions, adds useful/non-controversial features of the Code such as “respect”, “bullying” “have regard to advice” – query only when on council business

Disadvantages – possibly seen as too Leicester centric

Issues for a new “standards framework”

- Who will be on the Committee? Independents/councillors
- What form should the receipt of complaints take?
Written/verbal/anonymous
- How should complaints be investigated? Pace/whole committee?
- What sanctions will there be? Censure/publicity?

The timetable

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Independent Members & MO draft proposals | 18 August 2011 |
| Draft proposals @ Standards Committee | 7 September 2011 |
| Localism Bill enacted | Autumn |
| Consultation? | Autumn |
| Cabinet? | Autumn |
| Report to Council to approve changes | Autumn |

NOTE: for the purposes of the Political Conventions, any rights and responsibilities of Councillors will also be applicable to the City Mayor. This does not apply to the Code of Conduct.

CONVENTIONS FOR COUNCILLOR/OFFICER RELATIONSHIPS

INTRODUCTION

Councillors are democratically accountable and have political affiliations. Officers must serve the whole Council objectively. Together they must balance a complex range of obligations and competing interests. For this to be effective, Councillors and Officers must have mutual trust and respect for each other's requirements and duties. There must also be transparent consistency in everyday working relationships.

Ten General Principles of Conduct for Councillors and co-opted members of local authorities have been prescribed by legislation (*Appendix 3*). There is also a Model Code of Conduct (*Appendix 4*) which sets out the minimum standards Councillors and co-opted members must observe. These Conventions operate within that framework and provide the Council's local ground rules.

Councillors, co-opted members and officers agree to observe the General Principles, and the Model Code and these Conventions, and to be guided by them in the interests of fair treatment and good government.

The Conventions are the Council's way of applying the following basic principles:

- **Members have a right to information and support on a “need to know” basis.**

The “need” is so that they can perform their role as Councillor. It can be limited by conflict of interest, confidentiality and practicality.

- **Officers must serve the whole Council objectively.**

They must therefore provide “*unified advice*” at all times. This is advice which is objective, consistent and points out all relevant factors. Different points of view between Officers should be resolved or presented in a balanced way which helps Councillors to choose between them.

- **Political processes and different roles for Councillors are a legitimate part of local democracy.**

Officer advice and support can be tailored accordingly. A party group is entitled to the confidentiality of Officer advice on developing policies and may decide

when to publish a proposal. The overall arrangements for Officer advice must be transparent.

Observance of the General Principles, the Model Code and these Conventions is essential to the maintenance of high standards of probity and integrity.

1. OFFICER NEUTRALITY

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1.1 Every Officer appointment and every employment decision must be on merit alone (by law). The Council has no political assistants.</p> | <p>Councillors appoint officers to the following posts and above only: Divisional Directors, other officers who are directly accountable to a Strategic Director / Chief Executive for all or most of their duties (excluding officers whose duties are solely secretarial / clerical / support).</p> <p>Councillors have a formal role in certain employment appeals.</p> <p>Party political factors cannot be taken into account.</p> | <p>Policy support to Councillors must conform to the “<i>unified advice</i>” principle. It must be for Council, and not for party political purposes. Work which could be open to misinterpretation must be transparent and justified where necessary, particularly at sensitive times (such as a pending election).</p> |
| <p>1.2 Certain posts are politically restricted, including all senior posts.</p> | | <p>Politically restricted Officers cannot be Councillors or MPs. They cannot “<i>speak or publish written work to the public at large or a section of the public, with the apparent intention of affecting public support for a political party</i>”. They can speak or publish “<i>to such an extent as is necessary for the proper performance of their duties</i>”.</p> |
| <p>1.3 Officers serve the whole Council and must be politically neutral at work.</p> | <p>Councillors should respect Officers’ right to private political opinions. These should not be used against an Officer who remains neutral at work and observes the relevant codes.</p> | <p>The Council’s employment procedures and Codes of Conduct must be observed. Failure to do so could be a disciplinary matter.</p> |
| <p>1.4 Any questions about neutrality or improper conduct by an officer should be raised in private with the</p> | <p>Public accusation (direct or indirect) is potentially defamatory and such questions should not be raised in</p> | <p>Officers must be prepared to correct an inadvertent failure to declare an interest, or to justify a decision not</p> |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| relevant Director, Monitoring Officer or committee adviser. | public meetings. Advice should be taken before meetings. If an issue arises in a meeting, an adjournment may be appropriate to consider how to deal with it. Challenging a deliberate decision not to declare an interest should also be done off agenda. | to declare an apparent interest. Prior employment is not automatically a declarable interest, but it may be in certain cases. |
| 1.5 Close personal relationships between Councillors and Officers should be declared to the relevant Party Whip and Director, and entered in the voluntary register of interests. The test is whether a member of the public might reasonably consider the relationship likely to influence the Councillor or Officer in their respective roles. | The Councillor concerned should judge when a personal relationship has formed or whether a family relationship or friendship might reasonably be considered as having influence (depending on domestic arrangements and other circumstances). The Party Whip should consider how working contact between the Councillor and Officer should be avoided or managed to dispel perceived bias, taking advice from the Monitoring Officer if necessary. | The Officer concerned should judge when to make a declaration. The Director should consider how to avoid or manage working contact to dispel perceived bias, taking advice from the Monitoring Officer if necessary. |
| 1.6 Mutual respect and due courtesy between Councillors and Officers is expected by the Council. | Unwarranted criticism of Officers should be avoided, particularly when they cannot respond on equal terms, such as at Council meetings. Bullying by a Councillor could potentially expose the Council to a claim of constructive dismissal. | Officers should avoid unwarranted criticism of Councillors and should respect their rights under these Conventions. Officers should not only be neutral, they should appear neutral. Any matter which might cause doubt should be raised with the relevant Director to consider what steps are needed to provide reassurance. |

2. PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO COUNCILLORS

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| <p>2.1 Each Councillor has a right to the information reasonably required to perform his or her role as Councillor (the “<i>need to know</i>”) but <u>not</u> where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information is primarily needed for a non-Council purpose; or • There is a conflict of interest; or • There is an over-riding individual right of confidentiality (for example, in a children’s or employment matter); or • The resources needed to supply the information would be unreasonable. | <p>Councillors need not state a need to know when requesting information, unless one of the restrictions applies, in which case entitlement should be demonstrated. Any relevant interests or non-Council capacity should be declared at the time of the request. If dissatisfied with a refusal, the Director should be approached. If still dissatisfied the Monitoring Officer may be asked to determine entitlement.</p> | <p>Officers should assume a Councillor has a need to know unless one of the restrictions may apply. The Councillor should then be asked to demonstrate entitlement and, in cases of doubt, the Monitoring Officer may be consulted. An Officer should seek clearance from his or her manager before embarking on a significant amount of work to provide information.</p> |
| <p>2.2 Councillors are normally entitled to be given information on a confidential basis, the exceptions being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An over-riding Council interest (for example, protecting its legal and financial position); and • Natural justice (for example, giving an individual the chance to respond to allegations). | <p>Councillors should ensure that the need for confidentiality is made clear to officers.</p> | <p>The Councillor must be told immediately if an exception applies.</p> |
| <p>2.3 Councillors must respect the</p> | | |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| <p>confidentiality of confidential Council information and must use confidential information only for the purpose it is given (for example, information supplied in confidence to a Cabinet Member or Scrutiny Chair cannot be used to pursue a special Ward interest).</p> | | |
| <p>2.4 Councillors with a particular role have a special need to know arising from that role, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● City Mayor; ● Cabinet Member: matters relating to his or her portfolio; ● Scrutiny Chair and Vice-Chair: matters relating to their terms of reference and committee business; ● Ward Member: matters with special implications for the Ward (ie significantly more than the general implications for the City); <p>Working Party Members: matters relating to the role of the Working Party.</p> | <p>A Scrutiny Chair or Vice-Chair is not entitled to information in that capacity without it being known to and available to the other.</p> | <p><i>“Managed Access”</i> may be offered when information is particularly sensitive or needs interpretation. This involves inspection of the file combined with a briefing. Names and supporting evidence may need to be withheld.</p> |

3. ENTITLEMENT TO BRIEFING

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|---|---|--|
| <p>3.1 Councillors are entitled to be briefed in accordance with their need to know, taking account of any particular role they have. There are the same restrictions as for information (Convention 2.1). Councillors with a particular role may expect to be briefed about relevant matters without having to make a request.</p> | <p>Councillors should declare any relevant interest when requesting or receiving a briefing. If dissatisfied with a refusal to brief, the Director should be approached. If still dissatisfied, the Monitoring Officer may be asked to determine entitlement.</p> | <p>Officers should be clear about the capacity in which the Councillor is being briefed and the implications of any interest. In cases of doubt, the Monitoring Officer may be consulted. The Officer should always make it clear if a briefing is not based on unified advice, (ie is still subject to consultation with other Officers). Otherwise the Councillor is entitled to assume unified advice is being given.</p> |
| <p>3.2 A Party Group meeting may be briefed, provided:</p> <p>The Chief Executive knows of and approves the briefing;</p> <p>All Groups are informed and offered the same briefing;</p> <p>More than one Officer attends;</p> <p>Officers withdraw after briefing and any questions, and before political discussion;</p> <p>Officers do not write reports for Groups, leaving it for Councillors to present draft Committee reports or briefing notes.</p> | | |
| <p>3.3 The content of briefings is confidential to the Councillors</p> | | |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| concerned. Confidentiality extends to the questions asked by the Councillors. | | |
| 3.4 Cabinet Members, individually and collectively are entitled to regular confidential briefing on matters relevant to their portfolios and in support of the policies they are developing prior to them formulating formal proposals. | The relevant Cabinet Member or the Cabinet collectively determines whether confidential briefing material may be released to others for consultation or otherwise. When the stage of formal proposals is reached, supporting Officer advice becomes publishable in conjunction with the proposals. | A briefing to help a Councillor respond to a question at Council may be in the form of suggested a reply. It should be confined to factual and professional matters and to explanations of existing policy, leaving the Councillor to add any political comment. |
| 3.5 Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs are entitled to regular and confidential briefing on matters relating to Committee business. | A Chair or Vice-Chair is not entitled to be briefed in that capacity without the briefing being shared with both Chair and Vice-Chair at a joint meeting or otherwise. Confidential briefing in a different capacity (for example, developing policy options on behalf of a party group) may still be appropriate | |
| 3.6 Councillors must respect the confidentiality of information supplied in briefing and must use it only for the purposes for which they would have been entitled to receive it (for example, information supplied as Cabinet Member or Scrutiny Chair may not be used to pursue a special Ward interest, if it would not have been supplied to the Ward Councillor). | | |

4. CABINET AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| <p>4.1 Each Cabinet and Committee report should be in the name of a Director or the Chief Finance Officer (both if it has major financial significance) who must ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is made clear what stage in the process has been reached and what is required from Councillors; • There is a clear recommendation or options presented in a way which enable Councillors to choose between them; • It is clear who is responsible for action and to what timetable (including further reports); • All relevant factors are included and the issues are presented with professional objectivity; and • Associated briefings and presentations are also professionally objective. | <p>Cabinet Members may introduce reports at Cabinet. Officer advice should be obtained before the meeting on any alternative recommendation to be moved to ensure that operational, financial and legal factors are taken into account.</p> | <p>The principle of unified advice requires that meaningful and timely consultation is completed before finalising a report (particularly on financial and legal implications, on which the consultees should be named). Officers may take account of policies of the Council. Options, indeed recommendations, may reflect political realities, provided all realistic options are addressed in a way which is professionally objective and sustainable. It is not always necessary to recommend the course of minimum risk, provided risks and reasons for taking them are made clear.</p> |
| <p>4.2 Cabinet Members, individually or collectively, may determine the timetable for developing their</p> | <p>Deferring a report is a Cabinet decision and responsibility. A Scrutiny Committee may ask</p> | <p>Withdrawing a report is an Officer decision and responsibility, in consultation with Cabinet Lead.</p> |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| <p>policies, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The point at which confidential ideas become formal proposals for publication; • Who to consult and to what deadline; • The timing of Cabinet reports. <p>The relevant Director or the Chief Finance Officer must ensure that all essential decisions are requested by necessary deadlines.</p> | <p>for more time, information or other views before responding to Cabinet consultation, provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cabinet Lead Member agrees to additional time and consultation (these being matters for the Cabinet); and • The relevant Director agrees that further information can be provided at reasonable cost and use of Officer time. | |
| <p>4.3 It is for a full Scrutiny Committee to determine its programme for scrutinising the implementation of decisions and for recommending policy changes to Cabinet. It is expected that reports commissioned and evidence requested will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid cutting across work in support of developing Cabinet policies; and • Involve reasonable cost and use of officer time. | <p>Where the Cabinet and a Scrutiny Committee are considering the same service area, the Cabinet Lead Member, Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs and Director should agree a joint programme of work and the order in which reports should be consulted upon and presented.</p> | <p>Work for and evidence to a Scrutiny Committee is determined by the relevant Director (since the Committee has no decision-making powers). If the Committee insists on work or evidence the Monitoring Officer should be consulted on how to resolve the impasse.</p> |
| <p>4.4 Any Member of a Scrutiny Committee may place an item on its agenda by giving at least three</p> | <p>The Chair and Vice-Chair will be notified of a notice and asked whether a report should</p> | <p>The Monitoring Officer should immediately copy the notice to the Chair and Vice-Chair and the relevant Director</p> |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| <p>weeks' notice to the Monitoring Officer of the item and why the Committee is being asked to consider it. This right does not apply when the matter has already been dealt with under the "<i>six months rule</i>" in Procedure Rules.</p> | <p>be prepared to accompany the item. A report will be prepared if a majority agree. If not, the Committee may still, when considering the report, request a report at their next meeting.</p> | <p>and Cabinet Members and ask the Chair and Vice-Chair whether a report should accompany the item. The Director may offer a report in any event.</p> |
| <p>4.5 Guidance to Officers on all matters of Scrutiny Committee business and procedure (apart from Chaining meetings) shall, subject to full committee decisions, be determined by a majority of the Chair and Vice-Chair including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas; • Dates and times of meetings with a presumption that meetings on Mondays and Fridays will be avoided wherever practicable; • Evidence to be presented at a future meeting; and • Interested parties to be invited to attend and participate at future meetings. | <p>There is a standing offer by and invitation to the relevant Cabinet Lead Member and Director to attend Scrutiny Committee meetings with a view to explaining matters relevant to the agenda. A specific request to the Chair and Vice-Chair or invitation to the Cabinet Lead or Director should be made, giving reasonable notice, where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cabinet Lead would like to explain a particular matter; or • The Chair and Vice-Chair would like to explore a particular matter with the Cabinet Lead or Director. <p>It is expected that the Cabinet Lead would normally attend a Scrutiny Committee which is considering proposals at the request of the Cabinet or the Cabinet Lead.</p> | <p>Each Scrutiny Committee has a Lead Officer responsible for co-ordinating its overall programme and individual agendas in consultation with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair and Vice-Chair; • Relevant Cabinet Members (in relation to Cabinet policies in development); • Directors. |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| | <p>A Councillor who has been consulted on an officer decision is accountable to the Scrutiny Committee for the views expressed.</p> | |
| <p>4.6 The Chair is expected to conduct Scrutiny Committee meetings so as to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The basis of any participation by non-Members of the Committee is made clear at the outset (for example, question and supplementary, statement, or participation in debate); • The questioning of Cabinet Members, Officers and others is properly structured, and conducted in a courteous, seemly and constructive manner; <p>Questions are properly directed to the Cabinet Lead (for example, justifying policy) or Director (for example, progress with implementation), inviting both to attend where necessary.</p> | | |
| <p>4.7 The Chair and Vice-Chair should be jointly briefed on questions from the public. After the Chair has</p> | | |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| responded, the Vice-Chair may add comments. | | |

5. REGULATORY AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| <p>5.1 Development control, licensing and other quasi-judicial matters must be dealt with solely in accordance with the relevant policies and legal requirements, and in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appearance of decisions being based on party political consideration must be avoided; • If Officer recommendations are not accepted, care should be taken to ensure that any departures can be justified and that they are consistent over time. <p>The Code of Practice in <i>Appendix 3</i> must be followed.</p> | <p>Particular care should be taken to declare interests in formal meetings, at site visits and in formal discussion and, if necessary avoid participation. Potential interests should be raised with Officers before meetings. Any Cabinet Member would have an interest in a planning application by the Council.</p> | |
| <p>5.2 Only Councillors who have received appropriate training may participate in decisions relating to regulatory decisions and Employees' Committee Appeal Hearings.</p> | <p>Any untrained Councillor asked to participate in a decision should request training, which will be fast-tracked if necessary.</p> | |
| <p>5.3 Reports to Regulatory meetings should comply with Convention 4.1 except that political considerations are inappropriate. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be briefed and guide Committee business and procedure in line with the above</p> | | |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
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| convention 4 relating to Scrutiny Committees. | | |

6. WORKING PARTIES

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|---|--|----------|
| <p>6.1 Non-statutory Working Parties of Councillors may be set up by the Cabinet, or by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the relevant Councillors of all Groups, for the purpose of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing an all-party forum to assist in developing particular policies; • Providing a forum for consulting interested parties on particular services or issues; • Pursuing all-party consensus on an issue prior to a formal decision; • Enabling Cabinet and Scrutiny Members jointly to review a matter. | <p>Panels for statutory purposes and single-party groups are outside this Convention. The term “<i>Working Party</i>” defines the status of the body within the Council’s structures. It need not necessarily be used in the body’s title.</p> | |
| <p>6.2 A Working Party should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be politically balanced unless the Groups unanimously agree otherwise. • Have clear terms of reference. | | |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|---|-------------|----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be defined as a standing body or a task and finish group. | | |
| <p>6.3 Any co-opted members of the Working Party shall be determined by the Monitoring Officer or the Cabinet on the advice of the Working Party.</p> | | |
| <p>6.4 The Cabinet will be asked to review annually the need for each Working Party.</p> | | |

7. COUNCILLOR INVOLVEMENT IN CASEWORK

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|---|--|--|
| <p>7.1 Officers must implement Council policy within agreed procedures. An individual Councillor cannot require an Officer to vary this and cannot take a decision or instruct an Officer to take action. The Councillor's role in relation to casework is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be briefed or consulted where there is a need to know; • To pursue the interests of individuals by seeking information, testing action taken and asking for the appropriateness of decisions to be reconsidered. <p>A Councillor's entitlement to be involved is based on the "<i>need to know</i>" and determined in accordance with Conventions 2 and 3.</p> <p>Access to files may need to be denied or restricted if one of the exceptional circumstances in Convention 2.1 and 2.2 applies. Any access then allowed may need to be "<i>managed access</i>" (as described in Convention 2).</p> | <p>Councillors should avoid becoming unduly involved in individual cases and operational detail, except within clear procedures. Involvement in legal proceedings and audit investigations carries special dangers of prejudicing the case, and of personal embarrassment. The District Auditor has warned of the dangers of individual Councillors intervening in the processes of the Council without full knowledge of the facts.</p> <p>A Councillor lobbied on an issue (especially planning policy) should explain that any views expressed are personal and they cannot commit or anticipate the Council's decision. Any lobbying should be referred to at meetings to consider the policy.</p> | <p>Officers should take the lead in pointing out where the boundaries lie in particular areas, recognising that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors legitimately adopt different approaches • Councillors may legitimately pursue non-Ward issues (for example, a City-wide community of interest) • The special local knowledge of particular Councillors may be useful to a particular case. <p>Officers should point out to the Councillor when a restriction on the need to know may apply, explore entitlement with the Councillor and, in cases of doubt, consult the Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Directors should ensure that their staff know how to obtain appropriate senior management support (particularly out of hours) when the extent of a Councillor's involvement in an issue needs to be clarified.</p> |
| 7.2 A Councillor pursuing a Ward | A close relationship should be | |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|--|--|---|
| <p>matter on behalf of a close family member or friend should declare the relationship and consider whether to ask another Councillor to pursue the matter.</p> | <p>judged as in Convention 1.4.</p> | |
| <p>7.3 Councillors should not act as an individual's "<i>friend</i>" or provide a reference in relation to staffing matters within the Council (except in exceptional circumstances). They should avoid involvement in staff lobbying outside formal procedures.</p> | <p>The main procedures for Councillor involvement in staffing matters are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal machinery for taking individual staffing decisions. • Arrangements for staff representatives to submit views when staffing issues are before Councillors. | |
| <p>7.4 Staff may raise issues with their Councillor as citizens. They must not lobby Councillor on personal employment or budgetary matters except within the proper management and representative procedures (in the interests of balanced, unified advice to Councillors).</p> | <p>Councillors should refuse to respond to inappropriate lobbying and inform the relevant Director who should direct the staff towards the appropriate channels. This applies if the approach is superficially to a Ward Councillor, but in reality amounts to an employment matter.</p> | <p>Directors should ensure their staff are aware of these requirements and the proper channels for their views to be put forward.</p> |
| <p>7.5 A Councillor's right of access to Council premises and to bring in guests is based on the "<i>need to know</i>" (that is, to perform the Councillor's role). In addition to</p> | <p>When visiting Council premises, a Councillor should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make prior arrangements whenever possible for visits | <p>Directors should ensure that their staff are aware of these requirements and know how to obtain appropriate senior management support (particularly out of hours).</p> |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|--|---|--|
| <p>the general restrictions, it is subject to ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational continuity; • Confidentiality; • Compliance with Health & Safety arrangements; • Compliance with security requirements. | <p>outside NWC;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in on arrival with reception or the site manager; • Observe the site manager's requirements in relation to health and safety and so on. • Expect to be denied access or asked to leave in circumstances where compliance with the requirements cannot be guaranteed or the Councillor's behaviour might bring the Council into disrepute. | |
| <p>7.6 Councillors' guests should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be properly checked in and out; • Explain the purpose of their visit, if requested; • Observe the site manager's requirements; <p>Not be admitted after normal business hours, except for notified evening meetings and by special arrangement for particular purposes.</p> | | <p>Directors should ensure their staff are aware of these requirements and how to obtain appropriate senior management support (particularly after hours). They should also ensure staff are aware exactly when guests may be admitted outside normal opening hours.</p> |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| | | |

8. MEDIA RELATIONS AND PUBLISHED MATERIAL

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|---|--|---|
| <p>8.1 Statements and published material on behalf of the Council (including the Council's website) must not be party political and must comply with the Statutory Code of Practice (<i>Appendix 4</i>).</p> | <p>Councillors are the Council's principal spokespersons on policy. As individuals, they may make party political comment, but the Council may not publish such comment.</p> | <p>Officers may publish factual, professional and technical comment. Reports, presentations and publications must be professionally objective in language, content and tone. Directors must ensure that Officers who publish statements and material are competent for the role and understand the requirements of these Conventions.</p> |
| <p>8.2 News releases on behalf of the Council may only be issued through the Communications Unit. Official statements to the media should only be made after consultation with the Communications Unit. This is to ensure consistency and compliance with the Code.</p> | | <p>The Communications Unit is responsible for promoting and protecting the Council's overall interests in relation to the media.</p> <p>Directors are responsible for informing relevant Councillors when a media statement is proposed.</p> |
| <p>8.3 The Communications Unit will support and issue news releases in relation to the business of the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees. In this it will be guided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the relevant Cabinet Lead Member (on Cabinet matters) • By the Scrutiny Chair and Vice-Chair acting unanimously (on Scrutiny matters). | <p>Chair and Vice-Chair unanimity is essential, since its absence would usually imply a party political issue. The Scrutiny Chair is responsible for obtaining agreement. A statement may be in the name of the Chair if the Vice-Chair agrees.</p> <p>Another Councillor may act on behalf of a Chair and Vice-Chair member if unavailable.</p> | <p>News releases on behalf of a Scrutiny Committee may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their reasons for considering a matter; • Their findings and recommendations; • Majority and minority views. |

9. ELECTION PERIODS

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|---|-------------|--|
| <p>9.1 From the notice of a Parliamentary or local election until election day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing should be published (including the Council’s website) on a politically controversial issue, or which identifies views or policies with those of individual Councillors or party Groups; • In Parliamentary elections, nothing should be published which mentions or includes a picture of any prospective candidate; • Any publicity should be strictly objective, concentrating on facts or explanations; • During local elections, no Council newspaper, corporate or departmental should be published; • Councillors and Officers should take particular care to keep Officers distant from party political matters. • Councillors requesting information should make their “<i>need to know</i>” | | <p>Subject to this Convention, publicity is permitted of a Councillor speaking on behalf of the Council about an approved policy.</p> <p>External comments should be on strictly factual or professional matters. Care should be taken to avoid being misquoted or inadvertently associated with a particular candidate or political perspective.</p> <p>Where the Council ought to be represented as stakeholder at an event with a potentially political dimension, officers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all contributions to any discussion are factual and based on approved Council policy. • Avoid expressing opinions or views which may be perceived as containing a party political dimension. |

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|---|-------------|--|
| <p>clear and the “<i>need to know</i>” principle should be strictly observed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prospective Parliamentary candidates (including current MPs) should be treated equally. ● Officers should avoid even the appearance of political bias. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid engaging in any media activity relating to the event (that is avoid TV or radio interviews, comment to the media, inclusion in photographs or TV filming). |
| <p>9.2 During such election periods the Town Hall and New Walk Centre shall not be used for political meetings (other than normal private meetings on Council business). This prohibition shall extend to the Town Hall Square Concourse, but the rest of the Town Hall Square may (subject to prior booking) be used for political meetings.</p> | | |

10. PARTNERSHIPS

| <u>Convention</u> | <u>Councillors</u> | <u>Officers</u> |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|
| 10.1 Any partnership in which the Council participates must be asked to adopt the General Principles of Conduct (<i>Appendix 1</i>) or to justify any departures. | | |
| 10.2 The partnership must be asked to observe the rules in <i>Appendix 5</i> and to have an item on all agendas requesting that interests be declared. | | |

11.RESOLVING PROBLEMS

| Convention | Councillors | Officers |
|--|---|---|
| 11.1 Councillors and Officers should try to interpret and apply the Conventions consistently. Those concerned should first try to resolve any problems between themselves. | Councillors should raise unresolved problems with the relevant Assistant Director or Director. If necessary the Group Whip or Monitoring Officer should be consulted. | Officers should raise any unresolved problem with their Assistant Director or Director who will advise or take the matter up with the relevant Councillors. If necessary, the Monitoring Officer should be consulted. The Monitoring Officer may involve the relevant Group Whip. |

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000
(Relevant Authorities [General Principles] Order 2001)

Selflessness

1. Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity

2. Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity

3. Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

4. Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness

5. Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal Judgment

6. Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

7. Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of

their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

Duty to Uphold the Law

8. Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship

9. Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

10. Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should always act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Appendix 4

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ELECTED MEMBERS
ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON 20TH JUNE, 2007.

WITH EFFECT FROM 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2007

Part 1

General provisions

Introduction and interpretation

1. —(1) This Code applies to **you** as a member of an authority.
 - (2) You should read this Code together with the general principles prescribed by the Secretary of State
 - (3) It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.
 - (4) In this Code—
"meeting" means any meeting of—
 - (a) the authority;
 - (b) the executive of the authority;
 - (c) any of the authority's or its executive's committees, sub-committees, joint committees, joint sub-committees, or area committees;"member" includes a co-opted member and an appointed member.
 - (5) In relation to a parish council, references to an authority's monitoring officer and an authority's standards committee shall be read, respectively, as references to the monitoring officer and the standards committee of the district council or unitary county council which has functions in relation to the parish council for which it is responsible under section 55(12) of the Local Government Act 2000.

Scope

2. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (5), you must comply with this Code whenever you—
 - (a) conduct the business of your authority (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or
 - (b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of your authority,

and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly.

(2) Subject to sub-paragraphs (3) and (4), this Code does not have effect in relation to your conduct other than where it is in your official capacity.

(3) In addition to having effect in relation to conduct in your official capacity, paragraphs 3(2)(c), 5 and 6(a) also have effect, at any other time, where that conduct constitutes a criminal offence for which you have been convicted.

(4) Conduct to which this Code applies (whether that is conduct in your official capacity or conduct mentioned in sub-paragraph (3)) includes a criminal offence for which you are convicted (including an offence you committed before the date you took office, but for which you are convicted after that date).

(5) Where you act as a representative of your authority—
(a) on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct; or

(b) on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with your authority's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

General obligations

3. —(1) You must treat others with respect.

(2) You must not—

(a) do anything which may cause your authority to breach any of the equality enactments (as defined in section 33 of the Equality Act 2006(a);

(b) bully any person;

(c) intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be—
(i) a complainant,

(ii) a witness, or

(iii) involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings, in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with his or her authority's code of conduct; or

(d) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, your authority.

(3) In relation to police authorities and the Metropolitan Police Authority, for the purposes of sub-paragraph (2)(d) those who work for, or on behalf of, an authority are deemed to include a police officer.

4. You must not—

(a) disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where—

(i) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;

(ii) you are required by law to do so;

(iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or

(iv) the disclosure is—

(aa) reasonable and in the public interest; and

(bb) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority; or

(b) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

5. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.

6. You—

(a) must not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage; and

(b) must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority—

(i) act in accordance with your authority's reasonable requirements;

(ii) ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and

(c) must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986(a)

7. —(1) When reaching decisions on any matter you must have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by—

(a) your authority's chief finance officer; or

(b) your authority's monitoring officer,
where that officer is acting pursuant to his or her statutory duties.

(2) You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by your authority.

Part 2

Interests

Personal interests

8. —(1) You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where either—

(a) it relates to or is likely to affect—

(i) any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority;

(ii) any body—

(aa) exercising functions of a public nature;

(bb) directed to charitable purposes; or

(cc) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union), of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;

(iii) any employment or business carried on by you;

(iv) any person or body who employs or has appointed you;

(v) any person or body, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to you in respect of your election or any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties;

(vi) any person or body who has a place of business or land in your authority's area, and in whom you have a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that person or body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital (whichever is the lower);

(vii) any contract for goods, services or works made between your authority and you or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi);

(viii) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25;

(ix) any land in your authority's area in which you have a beneficial interest;

(x) any land where the landlord is your authority and you are, or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi) is, the

tenant;

(xi) any land in the authority's area for which you have a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer; or
(b) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of—
(i) (in the case of authorities with electoral divisions or wards) other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral division or ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision;

(ii) (in the case of the Greater London Authority) other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the Assembly constituency affected by the decision; or

(iii) (in all other cases) other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of your authority's area.

(2) In sub-paragraph (1)(b), a relevant person is—

(a) a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association; or

(b) any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;

(c) any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or

(d) any body of a type described in sub-paragraph (1)(a)(i) or (ii).

Disclosure of personal interests

9. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (7), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you attend a meeting of your authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

(2) Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority which relates to or is likely to affect a person described in paragraph 8(1)(a)(i) or 8(1)(a)(ii)(aa), you need only disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest when you address the meeting on that business.

(3) Where you have a personal interest in any business of the authority of the type mentioned in paragraph 8(1)(a)(viii), you need not disclose the nature or existence of that interest to the meeting if the interest was registered more than three years before the date of the meeting.

(4) Sub-paragraph (1) only applies where you are aware or ought

reasonably to be aware of the existence of the personal interest.

(5) Where you have a personal interest but, by virtue of paragraph 14, sensitive information relating to it is not registered in your authority's register of members' interests, you must indicate to the meeting that you have a personal interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.

(6) Subject to paragraph 12(1)(b), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must ensure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of that interest.

(7) In this paragraph, "executive decision" is to be construed in accordance with any regulations made by the Secretary of State under section 22 of the Local Government Act 2000(a)

Prejudicial interest generally

10. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where the 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 your judgement of the public interest.

(2) You do not have a prejudicial interest in any business of the authority where that business—

(a) does not affect your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 8;

(b) does not relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person or body described in paragraph 8; or

(c) relates to the functions of your authority in respect of—

(i) housing, where you are a tenant of your authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease;

(ii) school meals or school transport and travelling expenses, where you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;

(iii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;

(iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;

(v) any ceremonial honour given to members; and

(vi) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Prejudicial interests arising in relation to overview and scrutiny committees

11. You also have a prejudicial interest in any business before an overview and scrutiny committee of your authority (or of a sub-committee of such a committee) where—

(a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by your authority's executive or another of your authority's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and

(b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken, you were a member of the executive, committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee mentioned in paragraph (a) and you were present when that decision was made or action was taken.

Effect of prejudicial interests on participation

12. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority—

(a) you must withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting considering the business is being held—

(i) in a case where sub-paragraph (2) applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;

(ii) in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting;

unless you have obtained a dispensation from your authority's standards committee;

(b) you must not exercise executive functions in relation to that business; and

(c) you must not seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.

(2) Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority, you may attend a meeting (including a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee of your authority or of a sub-committee of such a committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

Part 3

Registration of Members' Interests

Registration of members' interests

13. —(1) Subject to paragraph 14, you must, within 28 days of—
(a) this Code being adopted by or applied to your authority; or

(b) your election or appointment to office (where that is later), register in your authority's register of members' interests (maintained under section 81(1) of the Local Government Act 2000) details of your personal interests where they fall within a category mentioned in paragraph 8(1)(a), by providing written notification to your authority's monitoring officer.

(2) Subject to paragraph 14, you must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new personal interest or change to any personal interest registered under paragraph (1), register details of that new personal interest or change by providing written notification to your authority's monitoring officer.

Sensitive information

14. —(1) Where you consider that the information relating to any of your personal interests is sensitive information, and your authority's monitoring officer agrees, you need not include that information when registering that interest, or, as the case may be, a change to that interest under paragraph 13.

(2) You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any change of circumstances which means that information excluded under paragraph (1) is no longer sensitive information, notify your authority's monitoring officer asking that the information be included in your authority's register of members' interests.

(3) In this Code, "sensitive information" means information whose availability for inspection by the public creates, or is likely to create, a serious risk that you or a person who lives with you may be subjected to violence or intimidation.

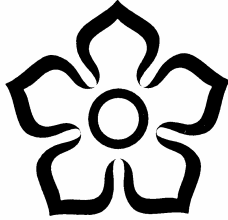
Suggested amendments to the Political Conventions

| Page | Addition or amendment |
|------|--|
| 255 | Add introductory comment about the democratic accountability of the City Mayor |
| 255 | Remove reference to the Ten General Principles ? |
| 255 | Remove reference to the Code of Conduct and Appendix 2 |
| 255 | Change the sentence “These Conventions operate....rules.” |
| 255 | Add a basic principle to reflect the advent of a City Mayor? |
| 255 | Retain the other three basic principles? |
| 261 | Amend “Chief Executive” to read “Head of Paid Service or relevant Strategic Director/Divisional Director”? |
| 262 | Amend “Cabinet Members” to read “The City Mayor, Deputy and Assistant Mayors”? |
| 264 | Amend the references to Scrutiny to reflect the new scrutiny arrangements and consider changing them in consultation with the Chair of Scrutiny? |
| 274 | Amend 9.1 to include Mayoral elections and prospective mayoral candidates. |

Appendix 6

Suggested additions from the Code of Conduct

| Page | Addition |
|------|--|
| 281 | Retain something about the new code only applying to Councillors when they are on official Council duty. |
| 282 | Retain something about respect, bullying |
| 282 | Amend the provision of information to Councillors part of the Conventions to make clear the need to protect confidential information |
| 283 | Include disrepute? |
| 283 | Include misuse of position? |
| 283 | Include "have regard to officer advice"? |
| 284 | Include give reasons for decisions? |
| 262 | Amend "Cabinet Members" to read "The City Mayor, Deputy and Assistant Mayors"? |



Leicester
City Council

Standards Committee
Council

7 September 2011
24 November 2011

Standards Committee Annual Report

Draft Report of the Independent Chair of the Standards Committee

1. Purpose of report

To inform Council of the work of the Standards Committee for the municipal year 2010-11.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Standards Committee is recommended to consider this draft report and make comments as it sees fit prior to its submission to Council.

2.2 Council is recommended to note the final report.

3. Report

3.1 The Standards Committee

During this period the full Standards Committee met on five occasions.

3.2 The Committee is made up of six elected members and three independent members. There was some variation of membership during the period which again presented some training challenges for the Committee. Officers from Democratic Support provided individual training sessions for members required to sit on sub-committees so that they were clear about their roles.

3.3 Activities of the Committee

3.4 Terms of Reference for the Committee and its Sub-Committees were reviewed and redrafted.

The Committee also considered and revised the “etiquette guide” for Council meetings in advance of the local elections in May, to assist newly-elected councillors.

The Committee produced a guidance leaflet for Members which outlined the process for the local assessment of complaints against councillors. This was circulated to all Members and included in the induction packs for new Members.

The Committee also looked into the implications of the growing popularity of social networking and the potential risks for Members in using these new ways of communicating. This work is ongoing, with a view to the current guidance being updated.

- 3.5 The Committee continued its tradition of inviting guests to our meetings. In November Lord Mayor Councillor Colin Hall attended and led a discussion about the Lord Mayor’s role in maintaining high standards in Council and supporting new members as well as sharing with the Committee his views on the importance of the Lord Mayor’s role in charity fundraising.
- 3.6 Much of the work of the Committee has involved receiving and commenting upon reports relevant to the ethical aspects of the Council’s work. The Corporate Governance Annual Report for 2009-10 was scrutinised during the period and feedback offered. The Committee also commented upon procedures relating to regulatory matters. The Code of Practice for member involvement in Licensing matters was scrutinised as was the Code of Practice for Member involvement Development Control decisions and in pre-application discussions.
- 3.7 Briefings on legislation relevant to the Committee’s work were considered, in particular relating to the implications of the Localism Bill on the future of the standards regime. The Committee began informal discussions on what might replace the current standards arrangements.
- 3.8 Local assessment of complaints
- 3.9 The Standards Assessment Sub-Committee met seven times to deal with a total of 14 complaints against councillors. The Review Sub-Committee considered four requests for the review of Assessment Sub-Committee decisions. One investigation into a complaint was completed and considered by the full Standards Committee. This report was subsequently the subject of a hearing to consider whether there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct. The decision was that there had been no breach.

The number of complaints received this year was unusually high and the majority of them were received between January and April 2011.

No breach of the Code of Conduct was found during the period.

3.10 Looking to the Future.

- 3.11 Currently the Localism Bill is making its way through Parliament. The Bill contains the abolition of Standards for England and legislation relating to standards committees and local assessment of complaints. It is likely that authorities will be given the authority to adopt their own code of conduct or make alternative arrangements as they see fit. They will also be able to decide how to deal with complaints against councillors, although it seems likely that the range of sanctions currently available will be removed. A new criminal offence with regard to failure to declare financial interests will be introduced.

Discussions that will take place in the next few months will be crucial for the Council in setting its ethical agenda and ensuring high standards of conduct in the future. This could include putting in place a more flexible system of dealing with complaints. Recommendations will be submitted in due course to the City Mayor, Cabinet and Council for consideration.

4. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
Steve Charlesworth, Head of Finance (Financial control)

4.2 Legal Implications

There are no additional legal implications.

4.3 Climate Change Implications

This report does not contain any significant climate change implications and therefore should not have a detrimental effect on the Council's climate change targets.

Helen Lansdown, Senior Environmental Consultant - Sustainable Procurement

4.4 Other Implications

| OTHER IMPLICATIONS | YES/ NO | Paragraph/References Within the Report |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Equal Opportunities | N | |
| Policy | N | |
| Sustainable and Environmental | N | |
| Crime and Disorder | N | |
| Human Rights Act | N | |
| Elderly/People on Low Income | N | |
| Corporate Parenting | N | |
| Health Inequalities Impact | N | |

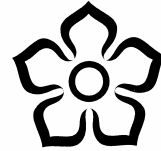
5. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Nil

6. Report Author

Sheila Brucciani

Independent Chair of the Standards Committee



Leicester
City Council

A Detailed Briefing Paper for Elected Members Protecting Your e-Identity V1 6 April 2009

Introduction

1. Traditionally, harassment and stalking has been something that is very direct and physical, whilst that remains true we now also face the same crimes the world of IT and the Internet.
2. Everyone is open to e-Harassment but as a recognisable public figure Elected Members are at heightened risk as they need to be contactable by their electors not just by phone but by email. Thus they are open not just to the SPAM that all email users suffer, but also to abuse through email by those who regard politicians of all levels and persuasions as targets.
3. Politicians were amongst the first to realise and exploit the wider potential of Social networking sites, public web posting sites for video-clips, and Chat and Blog. But these are now being used as platforms targeting personal abuse and attacks of many forms at Members.

The Threat

4. The Threat comes from abusers exploiting the usual list of IT Threats; Spyware, Hacking, SPAM, Phishing. These we see regularly used for identity theft and attacks aimed at stealing our money or our financial credentials such as our credit cards. Now these methods are being exploited by the would be harasser to get up close and personal with the victim in the electronic environment but whilst the victim may understandably fear physical violence the key targets are money and reputation – and for those in the public eye the latter is likely to be foremost.
5. Sometimes we are put at risk by others such as when data about us is not sufficiently protected. Sometimes we leave ourselves open through simply not being aware of how our use of email and the internet can be turned against us.
6. But we can fight back and the first steps are to understand the threat and how we can limit our exposure.

Hacking

- The spectre of the hacker was one of the earliest recognised threats on the Internet, often pictured as the spotty teenager in a back bedroom somewhere. Some of these really existed and whilst some have grown up and moved on to getting socially valuable lives others have moved on to using their skills for criminal gain. As in all walks of life where there is money to be made organised crime is never far away and this is certainly true with the internet organised crime gangs, often eastern European based, that include people who can be very direct in their methods of dealing with those who cross them.
- Whilst the hacking of an individual computer is possible, the majority of activity that we see at a personal level is the fully automated probing of computers looking for vulnerabilities to be exploited. This activity goes on at an industrial scale relying on us not getting the basics right, ie having a firewall, having antivirus and antispymware programmes that are kept up to date and patching our software programmes.

Fig. 1 – Firewall log



- Fig. 1 shows the log from the firewall of a home PC, reporting an automated probe from somewhere in China. This happens continuously to all of us who use the Internet which is why the basic best security practices are so important.

Safeguard Your IT Equipment

10. Use the simple ready to hand tools to protect your self, lock equipment down, with mobile devices be they phones, PDAs, laptops or whatever, use passwords and PINS to prevent their use by others. Never leave equipment on show in a car and if you are a laptop user get a security cable to secure it when in use out of your own environment.

Fig 2 – Basic precautions



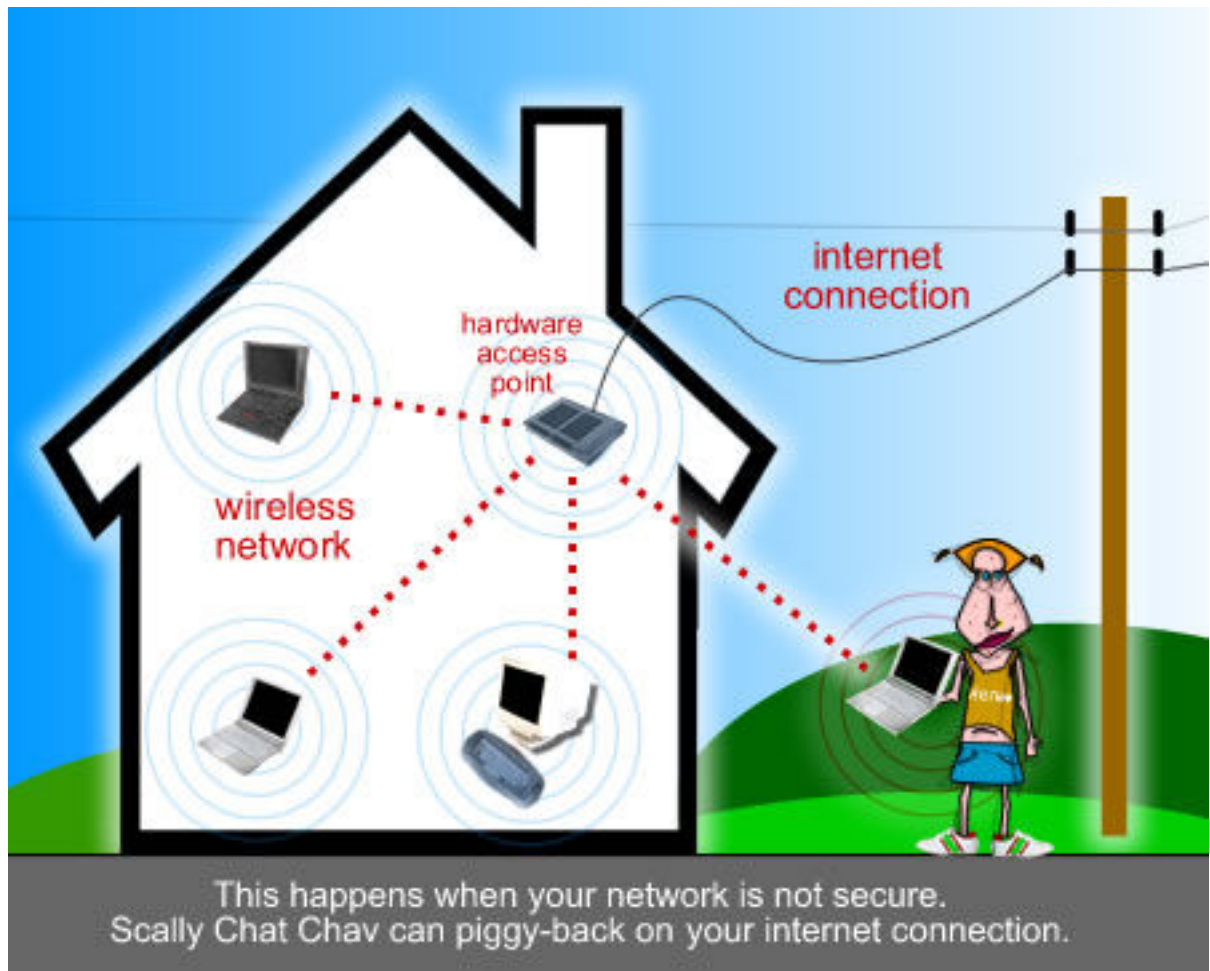
11. For LCC equipment you can order a security cable through IT Procurement and similar products are available through IT retailers for use with your personal equipment.
12. Your LCC equipment sits within an envelope of corporate protection measures, including; system and application patching for vulnerabilities, firewalls, antivirus (including anti-spyware), SPAM filtering etc etc. As a public figure it is doubly important that you apply the same measures to our own personal equipment. Do the commonsense basics:
 - Get a Firewall
 - Get regularly updated AntiVirus
 - Get antispysware
 - Use a reliable email service that has antiSPAM.

13. None of this need involve major expense, many really good products are freely available - see the note "A guide to Protecting Your Home PC" on Insite.

WiFi Piggyback

14. Many people use WiFi connections at home to connect multiple pcs to a single internet connection or simply to allow flexibility in the home. WiFi is incredibly useful but it's very easy to get wrong - commercial statistics show that 1 in 6 wireless users leave their wireless router unprotected and one in nine admit to piggybacking ie connecting to someone else's router to use the internet for free. Leaving your wireless connection open means others can potentially steal your passwords, bank details and identity information. Additionally if your wireless access is used to access illegal sites such as paedophilia then you, as well as the real offender, could be liable for prosecution.

Fig 3 – WiFi Piggyback



15. Protect your wireless internet connection with:
 - a strong password
 - change the administrative password

- check you use WPAv2 encryption as a minimum and not the older and weaker WPA or even worse WEP
16. WiFi access points provided by the Council will meet these standards.

Spyware

17. Spyware represents an insidious threat to privacy and can result in financial fraud. It is also a huge pain to live with. In simple terms it's a type of virus that can be installed on your computer without your knowledge. It is capable of logging your activity on the keyboard thereby capturing your passwords and other personal information. Infection usually occurs when it is installed alongside another program such as a peer to peer file sharing application. It's increasingly, blending with viruses making it harder to eradicate and harder to avoid.
18. There are different types of Spyware including adware which is designed to get you to visit commercial websites. Typically Adware Spyware will:
- Pop up unwanted adverts, including offensive material.
 - Download adverts from the internet, taking up your bandwidth.
 - Hijack your browser so that new menus appear or your default home page or search page is changed.
 - Put new icons on your desktop.
 - Block access to certain websites.
 - Try to get you to shut down anti-virus and antispyware or block updates.
 - Track your online activities in an effort to send you more adverts.
19. Surveillance spyware is the most extreme version. In common with some viruses it can:
- Scan your hard disc for private data such as credit card numbers.
 - Log the keys you type scanning for passwords or credit card numbers.
 - Take screen shots of the sites you visit to capture personal information.
 - Upload this information to criminals over the internet.
20. Sometimes spyware will advertise so-called spyware removal programs. This is a kind of extortion and you should stick to trusted anti-spyware applications

Preventing Spyware

21. The basic protection is to get antivirus and antispyware programmes and keep them up to date. In addition to that, download material from the internet with caution – some spyware installs alongside advertising-funded programs downloaded from the internet. So:
- Wherever possible, buy reputable software from reputable companies.

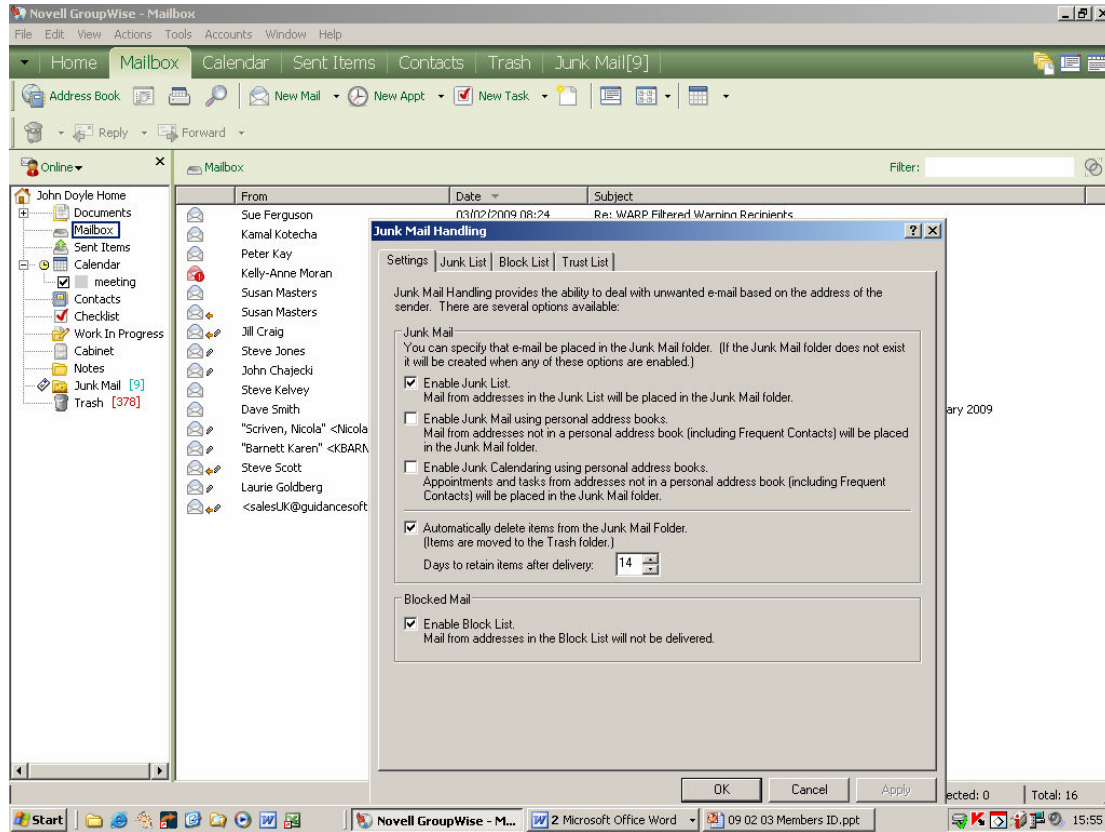
- If you download free software from the internet, exercise caution and only use trusted websites that operate a no-spyware policy, such as download.com.
- Be especially wary of programs that appear to be pirated or distributed from P2P file sharing networks.
- Be wary of 'free' programs that might be paid for by advertising.
- Be wary of 'free' programs that offer to install additional programs during the install process.
- Read the small print on licences for programs you download from the internet to make sure that you aren't giving permission for adware to be installed on your computer.
- Be careful about the websites you visit. Avoid dubious sites because these can also install spyware.

SPAM

22. Everyone suffers from unwanted emails or SPAM, but email may also be used very specifically as a means of personal harassment. The Council gives you an LCC Groupwise mail account to use as an Elected Member but additionally we recommend that you have separate mail accounts for your party political and private lives.
23. Never:
 - Give out the email address for the service that you use for your private life to any one other than family and your most trusted friends.
 - Autoforward from your LCC mail account to a private one – you are putting at risk Council information and potentially information protected under the DPA.
 - Use your LCC Groupwise email account as your primary account for your Party Political work.
24. For the Council we already block the majority of SPAM (approximately 20% of all incoming mail to the Council) that comes into our mail service from the Internet but a percentage will always get through. What we are not able to block is abusive mail that comes from individuals as this mail will not be recognised as SPAM, additionally we could be accused of limiting access to you which clearly we do not want to do!
25. You have the facility to start to filter out mail from abusive sources simply by placing any mail you chose in the Groupwise JunkMail Folder then any subsequent mail from that address will then automatically be sent to JunkMail. Periodically, you should move items from the Junk Mail folder into Trash. You can automate this very easily as follows:
 - Right-click on the Junk Mail folder
 - Select Junk Mail Handling
 - Tick the Automatic Delete box, and set the number of days to 7 or 14, depending on the volume of junk mail you are receiving.

Once the emails are in Trash, they are included in your usual procedure for deleting items, whether you do this manually or via a GroupWise Rule.

Fig 4 – Groupwise Junk Mail Handling



26. The majority of Internet email Service Providers are aware of their public responsibility to try and prevent their service as a means of abuse and will take action to block senders of such mails where they can. Free to use email services such as Gmail and HOTMAIL operate SPAM filtering and have clear terms and conditions for use and Privacy Policies. Make sure you understand how to use the SPAM filtering available and any other service that may help you cut down unwanted mail.
27. Remember if you're the victim of on-line abuse that you have recourse to the Police who can deal with criminal activity and you may wish to seek independent legal advice or contact the Council's Solicitor, Peter Nicholls.
28. Be Suspicious of Unsolicited Emails - You are in the public arena and your email address is constantly being "farmed" and then reused.

On-Line Shopping and Banking

29. In the UK over 40 per cent of the adult population, nearly 20.6 million people which represents 55 per cent of internet users, now bank

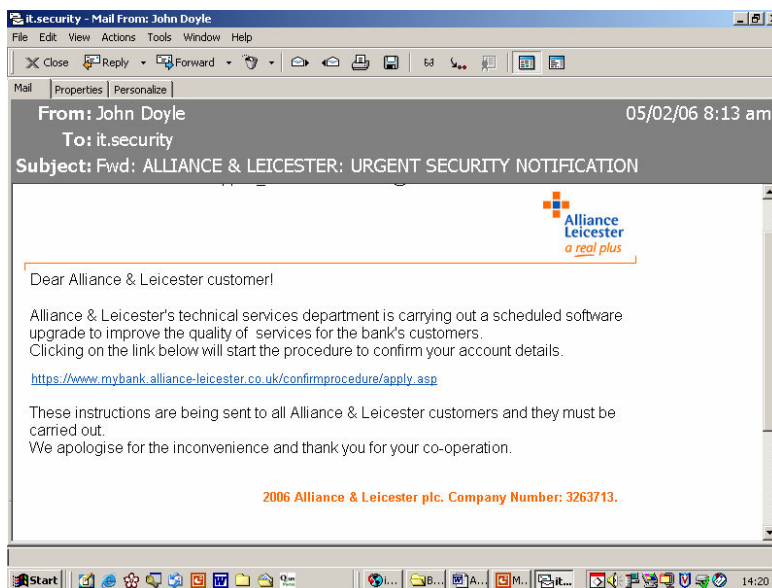
online. More and people are using their online accounts more regularly with one in five of us accessing our accounts daily compared to one in thirteen just four years ago.

30. All that activity represents an attractive target to criminals but because the banks' own systems have proved difficult to attack, criminals have turned their attention to getting information directly from online banking customers themselves. As with banking many of us now shop on line and that area too is being targeted.
31. Most fraud on online bank accounts involves a customer being tricked into giving away their user passwords and security information by a phishing scam, or by their computer being infected with spyware designed to steal the information.

Phishing

32. Criminals are constantly attempting to gain identities and financial details which is termed "Phishing". This is done in a variety of ways, most commonly the spoofed email claiming to come from a bank or building society asking you to check your account details and password. Remember no financial institution will contact you by email and ask for password or other sensitive info or ask you to enter same into an on-line form or website. Note particularly the embedded link in the email at Fig 5, these are often used to install spyware on your computer. Never follow such links or cut and paste, always type in the address that you want to visit or use your "Favourites" list.

Fig 5 – Phishing - Spoofed Financial email



33. Other forms of attack involve some type of attempted social engineering such as the request to help move a large sum of money from a war torn country for which you will get a percentage but you

need to send the details of your bank account first!. Some of these latter attempts are very clumsy and quite obvious but despite that people still get taken in and lose money.

- 34. More invidious for the public figure is the rather more subtle attempt at entrapment where no money is mentioned – at least at first. Of note here are the emails supposedly coming from individuals who claim to have been let down in arrangements to enter the UK and are seeking assistance. Here the risk to your reputation in addition to your money.
- 35. We also see similar methods used to download spyware to a victim's computer. This starts with an email invitation to visit a social networking site or a personal website. Once on the site spyware and viruses are automatically downloaded to our computer.

Fig 7 – Social Engineering – Website loaded spyware



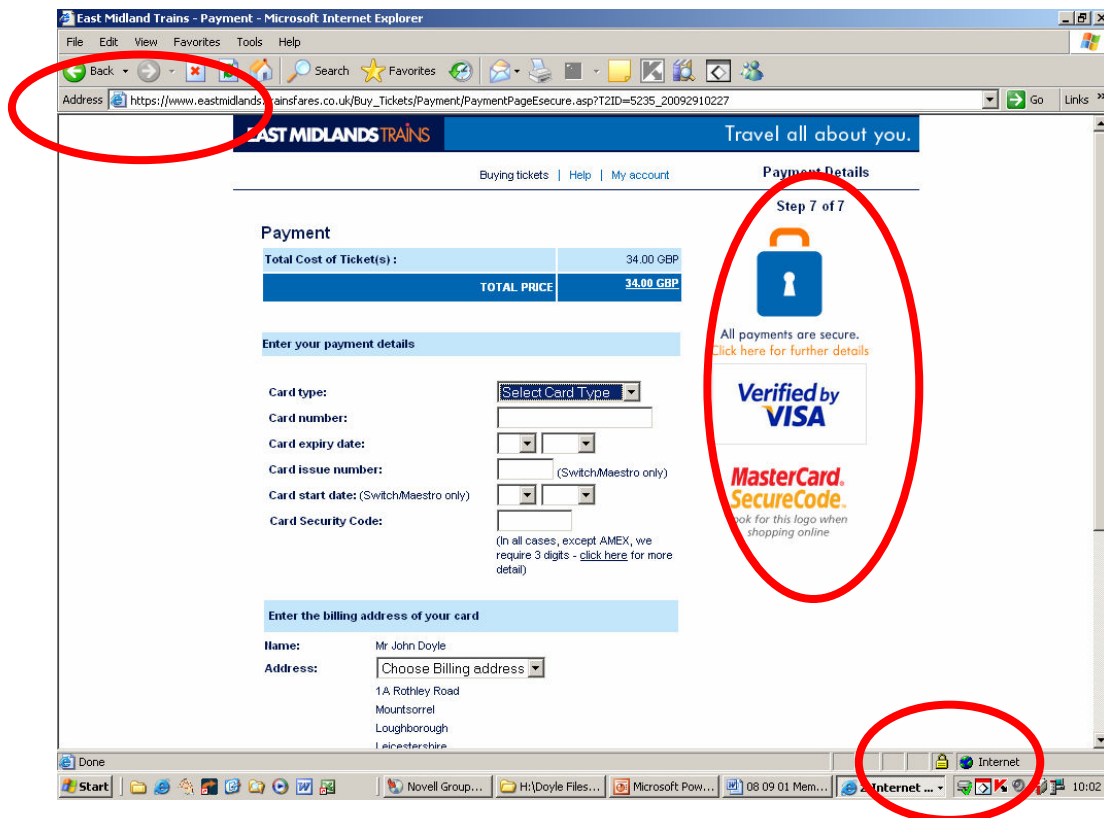
- 36. Always ensure you have up-to-date anti-virus and anti-spyware software installed. If your Council supplied equipment starts to act

oddy report it to ict.support.centre@leicester.gov.uk or Tel: 0116 252 88888.

Preventing On-Line Fraud

37. Be aware that your card details are as valuable as cash in the wrong hands so store your cards securely at all times and try not to let them out of your sight. Only shop at secure web sites and before submitting card details ensure that the locked padlock or unbroken key symbol is showing and the retailer's internet address has changed from 'http' to 'https'. By sticking to these simple rules you minimise the chances of your details being obtained by fraudsters.
38. Sign up to *Verified by Visa* or *MasterCard SecureCode* whenever you are given the option whilst shopping online. This involves you registering a password with your card company. By signing up, your card will have an additional level of security that will help prevent you from being a victim of online fraud.

Fig 8 Secured on – line Shopping Site



39. Other points to note are:
 - Always be suspicious of emails which are supposedly from your bank.
 - Never give your login details in full by email or over the phone – your bank will never request these in this way.
 - Never disclose your card PIN to anyone and never send it over the internet.

- Print out your order and keep copies of the retailer's terms and conditions, returns policy, delivery conditions, postal address (not a post office box) and phone number (not a mobile number).
- Consider using a separate credit card specifically for online transactions.
- Shred paperwork – both LCC related and personal
- Inform your Bank, Building Society and the DVLA when you change address, use Royal mail redirect to ensure your mail is redirected
- Report all phishing emails to reports@banksafeonline.org.uk .

Check Your Credit Report

40. A good indicator that something is amiss is unusual activity being shown up on your personal Credit Rating and you should monitor this through one of the Credit Rating companies. Contact Equifax, Experian, or CallerCredit for a personal report, these cost approximately £2. Consider registering with CIFAS for protective registration so that any credit requests in your name are automatically double checked

Social Networking and Personal Video Sites

41. Social networking and personal video sites is the most difficult area to do anything about when things go wrong and they are being used to mount abusive attacks upon you. There so many different sites, many not hosted here in the UK that could be used. Many are unreceptive to complaints, whilst others may find it difficult to judge where “free speech” becomes abuse. Dependable advice on the whole arena of Social Networking can be found on the Get Safe On Line website at http://www.getsafeonline.org/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=1459
42. Most, such as the widely used site for video clips, YouTube, do have clear guidance in their Terms of Use and Community Guidelines but getting action still may not be easy.
43. Your primary defence in preventing abuse through the use of sites such as YouTube is by limiting exploitable information about you being published on the Internet.
44. Many individuals use Social Networking sites, such as FaceBook, Bebo or Myspace, with great success, but there is always a risk, the golden rule is “*Think before you publish*”. All these sites try to be responsible in their delivery of services and offer advice on how to use their sites safely. Do follow that advice.
45. In a similar vein some individuals use on-line dating services such as Match.com and DatingDirect.com. Again most operate responsibly and set out clear guidance for users to protect themselves. As with using Social Networking sites do follow the advice.

Basics for the safe use of Social Networking Sites

46. Remember that despite the Terms of Use for any social networking site the effectiveness of access controls and password strengths on several sites is questionable and several sites used by “personalities” have been hacked and defaced. Some basic guidelines that will help minimise your risk are:
- Fully understand the Terms of Use for the site
 - Always use a strong (8 upper and lower case characters including numbers and punctuation marks)
 - Set the privacy settings
 - Think through what you are going to publish.
 - Limit the detail and the amount of personal information – dates of birth, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, bank details.
 - Set up a separate email account that does not use your real name and use it to register and receive mail from the site (avoid any service that requires too much personal information for registration)
 - Be very selective in accepting “friends” on the site
 - Beware of revealing your personal schedule such as when you are away on holiday
 - Be wary of 3rd Party applications available through social network sites – many of these contain viruses and spyware.
 - Be wary of geographical networks – even if you have set your privacy settings to ensure that only “friends” can view your profile joining a network permits access to everyone else in that network and you will need to reset your privacy settings.

Personal Protection

47. If things really start going wrong remember contact the Police and follow their advice but there are some simple first steps though:
- When out and about - Take a mobile telephone with you
 - Carry a personal attack alarm and learn how to use it
 - Do not carry anything that is meant for use as a weapon.
 - Try to alter your daily routines, ask friends to go with you whenever possible,
 - Always try to let someone know what your plans are.

Help the Police to Help You

48. If you are subject to abuse or you suspect stalking:
- Keep a record of what happened, where, when every time you were followed, phoned, received post or e-mail. The more details you have the better, how the offender looked or sounded, what they were wearing, the make, and number plate or colour of their car.
 - Keep letters, and parcels as evidence: even if they contain frightening or upsetting messages, do not throw them away and handle them as little as possible.

- Keep copies of e-mails on disk and print out hard copies, do not delete the original.
- Making notes in a diary is a good idea. Write the information down as soon as possible, when events are still fresh in your mind.
- If you recognise the handwriting, you can keep letters or parcels as evidence without having to open them.
- Make sure you keep any stored messages (including text messages) or telephone numbers that you have received on your mobile phone and caller ID units.
- Tell your friends, neighbours and work colleagues about what is happening.
- Try to get photographic or video evidence of your stalker (especially if they are someone already warned by the police not to come near you).

49. Avoiding Unwanted Telephone Calls

- Answer the phone by saying 'hello', not your name or number.
- Try to keep calm and not show emotion, many callers will give up if they don't think they're making an impression on you or your feelings.
- Use an answer machine to screen out calls and only talk to people you want to.
- If the caller rings again, put the handset down on a table for a few minutes - the caller will think you're listening. After a few minutes replace the handset, you do not have to listen to what the caller has to say.
- Register for the Telephone Preference Service (TPS), this will screen out at least the unwanted sales related calls both for landline and mobile phones. There is also a FAX preference Service for those who use FAX. A recent development is the SilentGuard service to limit as far as possible automated silent calls.

50. If you know or find out who is stalking you

- Do not confront your stalker or even engage them in conversation.
- Do not, under any circumstances, agree to a meeting to talk about how you feel about them constantly bothering you.
- Do not respond in any way to calls, letters, or conversations. If you ignore the phone nine times and pick it up on the tenth, you will send the message that persistence pays. Once they have your attention, they will be encouraged to carry on.

Further Information

www.bankingcode.org.uk – a body that ensures that banks and building societies comply with the standards detailed in *The Banking Code* and *The Business Banking Code*.

www.banksafeonline.org.uk – assistance for internet users to help them protect themselves from online scams and threats such as phishing.

www.callcredit.co.uk – a credit reference agency with a range of information services for businesses and individuals. (Tel: 0870 060 1414).

www.cardwatch.org.uk – information about how card fraud takes place in the UK, what is being done to prevent it and how you can help prevent yourself from becoming a victim.

www.chipandpin.co.uk – archive information, guidance and downloadable materials about chip and PIN.

www.cifas.org.uk – the UK's fraud prevention service, which enables its members to share information on fraudulent activity to help identify and prevent fraud taking place, including on card accounts.

www.consumerdirect.gov.uk – clear and practical help and advice for consumers in Great Britain.

www.equifax.co.uk – a credit reference agency that provides information to businesses, consumers and the public sector. (Tel: 0870 010 0583).

www.experian.co.uk – a credit reference agency that helps consumers, businesses and the public sector manage their credit information. (Tel: 0870 241 6212).

www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk – an independent service for resolving disputes between consumers and financial firms.

www.getsafeonline.org – a Government and leading business-sponsored site that provides advice on how to protect your computer and use the internet with safety.

www.identitytheft.org.uk – how to help protect yourself from identity theft, what to do if it happens to you and suggestions on where to get further help.

http://www.leics.police.uk/advice/3_crime_reduction/ - Leicestershire Constabulary advice on a whole series of crime reduction topics

www.mastercard.com/uk/personal/en/cardholderservices/index.html – details of how to sign up and benefit from extra protection when shopping online with a MasterCard.

www.ofc.gov.uk – provides information and advice for consumers about your rights when shopping, scams to avoid and where to go for help and assistance.

www.shopsafeonline.org.uk – information for businesses and cardholders about *Mastercard SecureCode* and *Verified by Visa*; what they are and how they work.

www.visaeurope.com/personal/onlineshopping/main.jsp – details of how to sign up and benefit from extra protection when shopping online with a Visa card.

<http://www.tpsonline.org.uk/tps/> - the telephone and fax preference services, registration will limit unwanted telemarketing calls.

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Appendix D

Standards Committee 2011/12 Work Programme – Sept 2011

2011/12

| Meeting | Item | Lead |
|-----------|--|------------------------|
| Sept 2011 | Discussion with Lord Mayor | HK |
| Sept 2011 | Draft proposal for the future of standards and code of conduct | Independent Members/PH |
| Sept 2011 | Standards Committee Annual Report 2010-11 | HK/SB |
| Nov 2011 | Discussion with City Mayor , subject to availability | HK |
| Nov 2011 | Localism Act – report on its finalised implications for standards in the Council | HK/PH |
| Nov 2011 | Consider report to Council on proposed replacement for standards regime | HK/PH/SB |
| Jan 2012 | Complaints against Councillors tracking report | HK |

Ongoing work

| Deadline | Item | Lead |
|----------|---|----------------------------|
| Ongoing | Update website to increase profile of Standards. (Work done to improve understanding of complaints against councillors not being applicable in private lives and to notify of changes to regime in near future) | HK |
| Ongoing | Update guidance on use of social networking | John Doyle |
| Ongoing | Future of Standards – as Localism Bill develops | HK/PH/ Independent Members |

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