

Standards Committee 2009 Work Programme

	Work area	Timescales	Lead	Description	Progress
Standing Items					
1.	Introduce programme of speakers to Standards Committee, e.g. CEX	Ongoing	LRJ/GA	To question the role key people play in the ethical governance of the council	
2.	Quarterly returns to Standards Board on Complaints against Members To include Derby, Nottm and Leics on a six monthly basis	Jan 10	GA	Report to compare Leicester with other Local Authorities in terms of numbers of cases and outcomes September – 2008/9 Annual Report January – First half of 2009/10	
Special Reports					
1.	Review of revision of political conventions	Jan 10	PN	Report to Standards Committee	
2.	Standards Annual Report to Council	Sep 09 – For Discussion Nov draft Jan – sign off	LRJ	Suggestion from July Committee meeting that the council produces an annual report on standards. Discussion required as to what Committee would wish to see such a report cover and the timing of it at September meeting Final version to provide a hook for a first person article of Chair to be publicised via press.	

3.	Code of Practice – Member involvement in Licensing Decision Making	July 09 Nov 09	AC	A draft code has been prepared. This is in the process of being aligned to Code of Conduct on Hearings for further discussion at September meeting	
4.	Report on mediation	Nov 09	PN	The Committee asked for further details as to what could be expected in the circumstances where an assessment sub-committee refer to MO for further action	
5.	Approach County Council to build a “critical friend” relationship to learn from each other on complaints.	Nov 09	PN	A mutually supportive relationship with the County Council was deemed useful to Standards at Leicester Could be fostered through joint publicity work (below)	
6.	Revise Council script “member conduct at meeting”	Nov 09	PN/LRJ	Consider how to give more “teeth” to the constitution’s Council procedure rules regarding Members’ behaviour and the Lord Mayor’s powers to address. Work needed to bring council script (designed in 2004) in line with Code of Conduct	
7.	Review of complaints process to date	Jan 10	LRJ	A review of the processes that have progressed and been amended over the last 18 months. In particular an attempt to have better standard letters and desk notes to apply in certain situations. May include guidance for members in what is expected in a consideration meeting A guide for members who are subject to complaint on what they can expect from the process. Also to include a point of contact for advice that is no the MO. Positive and negative reasons for members to cooperate with investigations.	

				Was scheduled for November but due to capacity issues this work has not been progressed.	
8.	Find out from Standards Board whether there is latitude in the future for a finding of 'Not Proven'?	Jan 10	PN	In the review of process can we find out from Standards Board whether there is latitude in the future for a finding of 'Not Proven'? It could be a more precise reflection of an inconclusive outcome than 'no breach'. Future cases may also be inconclusive and give rise to learning points, both for the individual member and more generally. In such cases, might 'Not proven' permit specific follow up on such issues for the individual, as well as for members in general? To be included in report on item 7	
9.	Standards Performance	Jan 09	PN	Officers to investigate further with Nottm how they have managed to remain at nil for complaints in 2008/9	
10.	Member Development	Nov 09	LRJ	Short verbal update to Committee reflecting the way in which standards and Code of Conduct is being embedded into Member Development Forum work programme.	
11.	New Code of Conduct	TBC	LRJ/PN	Awaiting national agreement and guidance on new code	
12.	Scrutiny of current Officer Code of Conduct	TBC	PN	Agreed at May meeting of Standards Committee	
13.	Audit Commission	TBC	PN/LRJ	AC requested to attend Standards Committee six months in advance of next assessment to allow for challenge of previous findings but also what they will especially be looking for in next assessment	
14.	Officer support to Standards Committee	Jan 10	LRJ	Review to be undertaken of support required by Standards Committee concerning, in particular, capacity.	
Communications					
1.	Outcome of complaints and	Jan 10	LRJ	Protocol to be agreed on how to publicise the outcome	

	investigations			of complaints to members/officers/general public – linked to review of process (7above)	
2.	Publicising work of Committee and Complaints process Chair to write formally to Leics Chair regarding relationship	Jan 10 Jan 10	LRJ/GA	Work with County post elections June 09	
3.	Standards and Ward Meetings	TBC	LRJ	Proposal to publicise work of committee and possibly annual report through ward meetings (making Members responsible for explaining to their own constituents what their role is regarding Code.	
4.	Improve Standards website and make links to other related sites	TBC	LRJ/GA	Not yet started	
5.	Identify Cabinet Champion for Standards	Jan 10	SB/LRJ	Use attendance of Leader at meeting to initiate the discussion	
6.	Establish regular meetings between Chair, Monitoring Officer and Leader	Dec 09	PN/SB		
7.	Independent Members to attend Cabinet meetings regularly to address different topics	Jan 10	SB/KM/ MR		
Training					
1.	Training for Members on Regulatory Committees, including annual refresher training Revise training and investigate possibility of bringing in IDeA trainer from Standards Conference	Jun 09 Nov 09	AC AC/LRJ	Independent members to be invited to attend. Work in progress to use a different method of training members on PDC.	
2.	Training on Code of Conduct for new members and prospective	Second half of 2010 and	LRJ	Link in with Member Development Forum	

	candidates	beyond			
3.	Training on Hearings	TBC To coincide with first investigation hearing	LRJ/PN	Believed to be best served by using a live case at the point of case reaching a hearing	
Completed					
	Delegated decision making to Cabinet members	Nov 09	PN	A report which will outline amendments to the delegated authority that will reside with Cabinet Leads	Complete
	District Audit Report on Ethical Governance	Sep 09	PN	July meeting requested this item brought to next meeting	Complete
	Briefing on Local Democracy Bill	Sep 09	LRJ/GA	Local Democracy Bill is going through parliament and will have some issues that it is useful for standards committee to have an awareness of	Complete
	Investigate why Nottingham have not received any complaints	Jul 09	GA	Explained within the yearly statistical report for Standards Committee on 16 th September	Complete
	Develop flowchart/list of questions for members on Assessment and Review Sub-committees	Feb 09	GA	Report to Standards Committee In February	Complete
	Revise wording to incorporate comments	May 09	GA	If agreed will be made available for subsequent sub-committees	Complete
	Training on Investigations	13 th Feb 09			Complete
	Definition and guidance on "hearsay"	Feb 09	PN	Report to Standards Committee	Complete
	Revision of guidance	Mar 09	PN		Complete
	Training on Standards Complaints Process including ethical	20 Mar 09	LRJ/PN/	To review in light of any changes to membership after May	Complete

	governance		GA		
	Ensure effective interface with the Delivering Excellence programme Invite speaker for the DE team to Standards Committee	Ongoing Mar 09	PN PN	Invite sent for March Standards Committee. Neil Sartorio to attend.	Complete
	Indemnification arrangements	May 09	Oral update PN		Complete
	Make links between Audit, Standards and Scrutiny committees	May 09	PN/CP/L RJ	Issue has been included on scrutiny development plan	Complete
	Licensing Code of Conduct	May 09	AC attended May	Licensing to invite member of standards committee. Terms of Reference to be shared with Standards members	Complete
	2009 Assembly of Standards Committees (12/13 October)	May 09	GA	Only 1 member so far to accompany Liz and Peter	Complete
	Whole scale revision of Members' Register of Interests with each member completing a new entry – including gifts and hospitality	May 09	LRJ	Form sent to members both electronically and hard copy.	Complete
	Corporate Governance Annual Report	Jul 09	PN		Complete
	Report on granting dispensations to Members	Jul 09	PN		Complete