



Walsall Council

Standards Committee – 11 June 2007

Timetable of standard items for Standard Committee Agenda – 2007/08

Summary of Report

To advise the Committee of the timetable of standard items for Standard Committee Agenda for 2007/08.

Recommendations

- (1) That the content of the report be noted;
- (2) That the Committee agrees the timetable of standard items for the Standards Committee Agenda – 2007/08.

Resource and legal considerations

None arising from this report.

Citizen impact

None arising from this report.

Environmental impact

None arising from this report.

Performance and risk management issues

None arising from this report.

Equality implications

None arising from this report.

Consultation

None

Background papers

All published

Signed:

**Assistant Director of Legal
and Constitutional Services**

Date: 25 May 2007

Contact Officer

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Report detail

This report has been completed so that members of the Standards Committee have a programme of reports that are intended to be presented at forthcoming meetings. Whilst the list is not exhaustive as there may be adhoc meetings required to deal with specific matters or unplanned items may arise, the programme of work will provide an overall structure to Committee meetings.

The report author considered the work of neighbouring Standards Committees to establish if they show any synergy in the items that are presented to their Standards Committee (ie: if similar reports were presented at the same time on an annual basis) but none could be established.

The report author, in consultation with the Assistant Director of Legal and Constitutional Services has considered the work of this Committee and to this end has devised a programme of items that we propose to present to the Committee at each of its meetings throughout 2007/08. This is attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The committee are requested to consider the draft programme of work and if there any specific items they would like to explore within their terms of reference, (Appendix 2).

Appendix 1

Items to be presented at June 2007 Committee

At the June meeting we normally present a report on the new appointments to the Standards Committee (independent members) – this has been delayed and will be presented to you shortly.

Further items to be presented at the June meeting include:

- Reminder of nominations for the Annual Assembly of Standard Committees and Standards Board Roadshow (who will be representing Walsall Council).
- Election of the Chair and Vice Chair.
- Case Law Update (if relevant).
- Standards Bulletin (if relevant).
- AOB (if relevant).

Items to be presented at October 2007 Committee

Items to be considered at the October meeting include:

- Report detailing member's attendance levels (half year report).
- E-mail & Internet Usage Policy.
- Report outlining code of conduct complaints that have been received within the last 6 months, including details of their outcomes.
- Training session detailing the sanctions that are available to Committee members.
- Report detailing feedback from the 6th Annual Assembly of Standards Committees.
- Annual Ombudsmen report update.
- Case Law Update (if relevant).
- Standards Bulletin (if relevant).
- AOB (if relevant).

Items to be presented at the January 2008 Committee

Items to be presented to the January meeting include:

- Report detailing the procedure for appointment of independent members of the Standards Committee.
- Training session (Interests).
- Case Law Update (if relevant).

- Standards Bulletin (if relevant).
- AOB (if relevant).

Items to be presented to the March 2008 Committee

Items to be considered at the March meeting include:

- Report detailing member's attendance levels (yearly report).
- Purdah regulations
- Report outlining code of conduct complaints that have been received within the last 12 months including details of their outcomes.
- Training session (dispensations).
- Case Law Update (if relevant).
- Standards Bulletin (if relevant).
- AOB (if relevant).

Appendix 2

Terms of reference for the Standards Committee

Role and Function

The Standards Committee will have the following roles and functions:

- (a) promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct of elected Members and co-opted voting members;
- (b) assisting and ensuring that Councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (c) advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (d) monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (e) advising, training or arranging to train elected Member and co-opted voting members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (f) granting dispensations to elected Members and co-opted voting members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct, subject to the issue of Regulations by the Secretary of State;
- (g) dealing with any reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal, or from the Standards Board and any report from the monitoring officer on any matter which is referred by an ethical standards officer to the monitoring officer;
- (h) to consider guidance from the Standards Board for England and any recommendations received from a Case Tribunal;
- (i) implementing the decision of the Case Tribunal;
- (j) dealing with complaints of breaches of the Model Code of Conduct referred to the Monitoring Officer by an Ethical Standards Officer, subject to enabling regulations being made under Section 66 of the Local Government Act, 2000;
- (k) dealing with Members misconduct falling outside breaches of the Code of Conduct, for example, breaches of protocols.

The Standards Committee will have the following additional functions:-

- (i) Dealing with allegations of breaches of the Member's Code of Conduct referred to the Monitoring Officer by an Ethical Standards Officer- subject to regulations being made under Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- (ii) To consider Ombudsman's reports and make payments or other benefits in cases of maladministration.
- (iii) Oversight of the Whistleblowing Policy.
- (iv) Strategic overview of the Employees' Code of Conduct.
- (v) Anti-fraud procedures.
- (vi) Overview of the conduct element of reports from external auditors.
- (vii) Oversight and review of the Constitution.
- (viii) Dealing with breaches of protocols.