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24 August 2009

To: Chairman – Mrs KM English  
Vice-Chairman – Mr AC Hampton

Members of the Standards Committee:

Mr RF Bryant	Parish Member
Ms GJ Butcher	Independent Member
NN Cathcart	District Council Member, non-group
Mrs SJO Doggett	District Council Member, Independent Group
Mr M Farrar	Parish Member
R Hall	District Council Member, Conservative Group
Mr JL House	Independent Member
Mr DC Kelleway	Parish Member
Mrs JE Lockwood	District Council Member, Liberal Democrat Group
Mrs CAED Murfitt	District Council Member, non-group
AG Orgee	District Council Member, Conservative Group
Mrs MS Pilfold-Allan	Independent Member
Mr EM Revell	Independent Member
A Riley	District Council Member, Independent Group
Mr CF Tomsett	Parish Member
Dr SEK van de Ven	District Council Member, Liberal Democrat Group
Mr JG Williams	Independent Member

and to I Dewar (Interim County Executive Officer, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CPALC)), for information.

Dear Sir or Madam

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**, which will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, FIRST FLOOR** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **WEDNESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2009** at **10.00 a.m.**

Yours faithfully  
**GJ HARLOCK**  
Chief Executive

**The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you.**

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**AGENDA**

**PAGES**

**PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

**1. Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence from committee members.

2. **Declarations of Interest**
  3. **Appointment to Standards Committee of a Parish Council Member 2009-2013**  
 To note that, all parish and community councils and meetings in South Cambridgeshire having been invited to submit nominations for a representative to serve on the Standards Committee for the next four years, Stapleford Parish Council had nominated Mr Michael Farrar, who was returned unopposed and will serve a four-year term until 7 August 2013.
  4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** 1 - 10  
 To authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2009 as a correct record.
  5. **Chairman's Address**
- DECISION ITEMS**
6. **Joint Standards Committees** 11 - 16
  7. **FOXTON Parish Council: Requests for Dispensations** 17 - 20
  8. **2010 Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards: Standards and Ethics** 21 - 28  
 For decision on whether or not to submit an entry. Details of the criteria are attached.
  9. **Standards Committee Work Programme: KPIs for 2009/10** 29 - 32  
 For confirmation of KPIs held over from previous meeting.
  10. **Parish Liaison Working Group**  
 For discussion.
- INFORMATION ITEMS**
11. **Public Perceptions of Ethics** 33 - 48  
 To note.
  12. **Standards for England Quarterly Statistics** 49 - 54  
 To note.
  13. **Chairman's Delegation Meetings: Review of Protocol and Operating Principles**  
 At the Standards Committee Hearing Panel on 7 May 2009 the Panel made the following recommendation to the Council: *"That the procedures and operating principles of the Chairman's Delegation Meeting be reviewed within three months of the hearing, this review to include the consideration of provision of officer support from either Legal or Democratic Services, or both. This should be achieved by the establishment by the Monitoring Officer of an officer working group, reporting to a task and finish group of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and to the Standards Committee at its 16 September 2009 meeting."*

This recommendation was considered by the Monitoring Officer and the Chairman of Scrutiny and Overview Committee and it was decided that, as the Planning Committee was a regulatory committee which could decide its own procedures, the best route for review was for an officer working group, working with the Planning Portfolio Holder, to consider the matter and to make recommendations to Planning Committee itself.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer, Fiona McMillan, Senior Lawyer Gary Duthie (who advises Planning Committee) and Development Control Manager David Rush formed an officer working group and have met three times since May to consider the current Chairman's Delegation Meeting process and options for review. The Planning Portfolio Holder joined the group for the last two meetings. The Planning Portfolio holder was asked to indicate a "preferred option" at his Portfolio Holder's meeting on 1 September and the review options report will go to full Planning Committee on 8 October. The Committee's decision will be reported to the Standards Committee meeting in December 2009.

**To note.**

#### **STANDING ITEMS**

**14. Update from Assessment and Review Panels**

**55 - 56**

**To note.**

**15. Advice to, and training of, District and Parish Council Members in relation to the Members' Code**

The Parish Forum training events have been re-scheduled for autumn 2009 and will be advertised to the parish councils through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CPALC) and the Standards Committee Newsletter.

Standards Committee members are asked to commit to attending at least one session.

<b>Document</b>	<b>Weekly Bulletin</b>
Standards for England Research Report: Stakeholder Tracker 2009 - Satisfaction with the SBE and Attitudes to the Ethical Environment)	17 Jun 2009
Standards for England Bulletin 44	1 Jul 2009
Parish Council Toolkit 2009	15 Jul 2009 (hard copies also sent)
Assessing the Impact and Effectiveness of the Ethical Framework in Local Government in England: First Interim Report to Standards for England	15 Jul 2009
Standards Committee Newsletter Summer 2009	29 Jul 2009 (hard copies also sent)
Public Meeting Arrangements Checklist for Parish Clerks	29 Jul 2009 (hard copies also sent)
Chairman's Delegation Meetings: Review of Protocol and Operating Principles (invitation to	5 Aug 2009 (have also been invited

public meetings) – this matter arose from the recommendations of a Standards Committee Hearing Panel in May 2009	directly by Democratic Services)
Appointment to Standards Committee of a Parish Council Member 2009-2013: Results	12 Aug 2009 (also advised directly following close of nominations on 7 Aug 2009)

**To note.**

**16. Feedback from Parish Councils**

None received.

**17. Local Investigations, Hearings and References made to Ethical Standards Officers**

The Assessment Panel has referred one case for a local investigation. There have not been any hearing panels nor cases referred to Ethical Standards Officers.

**To note.**

**18. Operation of Code of Conduct and other statutory functions of the Monitoring Officer**

**57 - 60**

Attached for information are details of three recent decisions by the Adjudication Panel for England.

**19. Operation of the Council's "whistle-blowing" policy**

**61 - 84**

Attached is the information available to all members of staff on the Council's intranet, accessible immediately upon opening an internet browser and clicking the link to "Whistleblowing". The link is displayed prominently under an area labelled "Items of Interest". All officers receive hard copies annually of the introduction and "Brief Guide to Whistleblowing".

Also attached is the Deputy Monitoring Officer's request to Monitoring Officers of neighbouring authorities about their whistleblowing policies, and the responses received.

**20. Date of Next Meeting**

The next two quarterly meetings are:

- Wednesday 9 December 2009 at 10 am; and
- Wednesday 10 March 2010 at 10 am.

An extraordinary meeting may be scheduled in late autumn 2009 if the revised Code of Conduct has been published. Members are advised to check their e-mail regularly for details.

## **GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL**

While the District Council endeavours to ensure that visitors come to no harm when visiting South Cambridgeshire Hall, those visitors also have a responsibility to make sure that they do not risk their own or others' safety.

### **Increased hygiene at South Cambridgeshire Hall**

In light of the swine flu pandemic, we have intensified our usual cleaning routines in council buildings. We have also introduced hand gel dispensers throughout the offices, including public areas. When visiting South Cambridgeshire Hall you are encouraged to use these facilities if and when required to help limit the spread of flu.

### **Security**

Members of the public attending meetings in non-public areas of the Council offices must report to Reception, sign in, and at all times wear the Visitor badges issued. Before leaving the building, such visitors must sign out and return their Visitor badges to Reception.

### **Emergency and Evacuation**

In the event of a fire, a continuous alarm will sound. Evacuate the building using the nearest escape route; from the Council Chamber or Mezzanine viewing gallery this would be via the staircase just outside the door. Go to the assembly point at the far side of the staff car park.

- **Do not** use the lifts to exit the building. If you are unable to negotiate stairs by yourself, the emergency staircase landings are provided with fire refuge areas, which afford protection for a minimum of 1.5 hours. Press the alarm button and wait for assistance from the Council fire wardens or the fire brigade.
- **Do not** re-enter the building until the officer in charge or the fire brigade confirms that it is safe to do so.

### **First Aid**

If someone feels unwell or needs first aid, please alert a member of staff.

### **Access for People with Disabilities**

The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you. All meeting rooms are accessible to wheelchair users. There are disabled toilet facilities on each floor of the building. Hearing loops and earphones are available from reception and can be used in all meeting rooms.

### **Toilets**

Public toilets are available on each floor of the building next to the lifts.

### **Recording of Business**

Unless specifically authorised by resolution, no audio and / or visual or photographic recording in any format is allowed at any meeting of the Council, the executive (Cabinet), or any committee, sub-committee or other sub-group of the Council or the executive.

### **Banners, Placards and similar items**

No member of the public shall be allowed to bring into or display at any Council meeting any banner, placard, poster or other similar item. The Chairman may require any such item to be removed.

### **Disturbance by Public**

If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room. If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may call for that part to be cleared.

### **Smoking**

Since 1 July 2008, the Council has operated a new Smoke Free Policy. Visitors are not allowed to smoke at any time within the Council offices, or in the car park or other grounds forming part of those offices.

### **Food and Drink**

Vending machines and a water dispenser are available on the ground floor near the lifts at the front of the building. Visitors are not allowed to bring food or drink into the meeting room.

### **Mobile Phones**

Visitors are asked to make sure that their phones and other mobile devices are set on silent / vibrate mode during meetings or are switched off altogether.