

South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridge
CB3 6EA

t: 08450 450 500
f: 01954 713150
dx: 729500 Cambridge 15
minicom: 01480 376743
www.scambs.gov.uk



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

To: All members of South Cambridgeshire District Council
All clerks of parish councils in South Cambridgeshire

28th June 2006

Dear Councillors and Clerks,

RE: Advice to District & Parish members in relation to the Code of Conduct

I am writing to you as Chairman of the Standards Committee of South Cambridgeshire to advise you on a matter that has arisen recently under the Code of Conduct. I would be grateful if the parish clerks could place this letter before their parish council at the earliest opportunity.

As you are all aware, from time to time it is necessary for matters arising under the Code to be investigated. This can be done either by an Ethical Standards Officer from the Standards Board for England or by the Monitoring Officer or someone appointed by him as a Local Investigation.

It is plainly desirable that the integrity of such investigations should not be compromised or appear to be compromised in any way. The Standards Board recently "took back" a matter that had been referred to the Monitoring Officer for Local Investigation. They have powers to do this under Regulation 5 (6) (a) of the Local Authorities (Code of Conduct) (Local Determination) Regulations 2003 (as amended). In this particular case the Ethical Standards Officer decided to take back the case both in the light of concerns about the integrity of a local investigation and in view of the potential seriousness of the allegation against the member, should it be proven.

Following this it appeared to myself and the Monitoring Officer that all members of the District and Parish Councils should now be reminded by the Standards Committee about the guidance on this issue. Anyone who is involved in, or who has knowledge of, any such investigation by the Ethical Standards Officer or Monitoring Officer should not speak to anyone else they know to be involved in that investigation about the investigation until after the investigation has been completed. This is so that the integrity of such investigations is not, or does not appear to be, compromised in any way.

I hope all District and Parish Members will all pay regard to this advice in the future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Gilbertson', written over a horizontal line.

David Gilbertson
Chairman of Standards Committee

E-mail: david@dgilbertson.freemove.co.uk

cc: Keith Barrand, Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils