

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME



### Completed actions from 2009/10

	Action	Who is responsible	Completion date	Status
1.	Implementation of Further Provisions Regulations 2009: Suspension of Standards Committee Functions, Establishing Joint Standards Committees, Dispensations	Deputy Monitoring Officers, Standards Committee members, Democratic Services Officers	Completed June 2009.	☺
2.	Implementation of on-line complaint submission system.	Democratic Services Team Leader	Completed. Intranet version introduced July 2009 for testing purposes. Public website version launched end August 2009.	☺
3.	Parish Council Members of Standards Committee: Development of Roles and Responsibilities	Parish Council Members, Chairman, Deputy Monitoring Officer, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CPALC)	Establishment of Parish Liaison Working Group September 2009.  Parish Council Questionnaire spring 2010.	☺
4.	Attendance at Standards Board Annual Assembly in October 2009	Deputy Monitoring Officers and representative(s) of Standards Committee	Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Mr Michael Farrar and Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt attended (Standards Committee budget). Deputy Monitoring Officer and Ms GJ Butcher invited to attend as speakers. Democratic Services Officer attended on first day (officer training budget). Reports made to Standards Committee December 2009.	☺
5.	Prepare annual report to Standards for England / Full Council	Monitoring Officer and Standards Committee	Completed April and May 2010, with both documents presented to full Council on 27 May 2010.	☺



### On-going actions carried forward into 2010/11 and new actions for 2010/11

	Action	Who is responsible	Completion date	Status
6.	Undertake Local Assessment of Complaints	Deputy Monitoring Officer & Assessment / Review / Hearings Panels	On-going, carried forward into 2010/11  2009/10 rolling average of 10.4 working days between receipt of complaint and decision from Assessment Panel, well within national indicator of 20 working days.	☺
7.	Determine allegations of misconduct when referred to SCDC by Standards for England.	Hearings Panel	On-going, carried forward into 2010/11	☺

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8.	Submit quarterly online monitoring returns to Standards for England	Deputy Monitoring Officer	On-going, carried forward into 2010/11	☺
9.	Consider and adjudicate on dispensation requests from parish councils	Standards Committee	On-going, carried forward into 2010/11	☺
10.	Training of district and parish councillors	Deputy Monitoring Officers & Standards Committee	On-going, carried forward into 2010/11  2009/10 achievements: District / Parish Councillors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three editions of Standards Committee Newsletter sent to all District Councillors and all Parish Councils in Summer 2009, Winter and Spring 2010.</li> <li>• Parish Council Toolkit sent to all Parish Councils in July 2009.</li> <li>• Public Meeting Checklist sent to all Parish Councils in July 2009, as requested by Standards Committee in June 2009.</li> <li>• Re-election of parish council member of Standards Committee – August 2009</li> <li>• Parish Council Forum (with CPALC) on issues relevant to parish councils – autumn 2009</li> <li>• Parish Liaison Working Group established autumn 2009</li> </ul>	☺
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web-based Code of Conduct and other relevant training modules for councillors and parish clerks to be launched autumn 2009, either on SCDC website, CPALC website, or both (done in partnership with CPALC) – incomplete due to insufficient officer capacity to provide on SCDC website during 2009/10.</li> </ul>	☹
			New for 2010/11: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish Councillor and Clerk training programme introduced, based on responses to Parish Council Questionnaire</li> </ul>	

	Action	Who is responsible	Completion date	Status
11.	Training of standards committee members		<p>On-going, carried forward into 2010/11</p> <p>2009/10 achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairmanship training attended by four independent members in June 2009</li> <li>• Assessment Panel meeting attended by four substitute members for training purposes in July 2009</li> <li>• Training sessions held after each Standards Committee meeting</li> </ul> <p>Average training attendance: 1.79 hours per Standards Committee member against target of 2-3 hours per year per Standards Committee member. Note that 2009-10 training was expected to include a session on the revised Code of Conduct, the adoption of which was postponed repeatedly by the Government; had this session gone ahead, it is certain that Standards Committee members' training would have exceeded the average of two hours per member.</p>	
12.	Promotion of the role and work of the Standards Committee and promotion of high standards of conduct by councillors	Monitoring Officer & Standards Committee	<p>On-going, carried forward into 2010/11</p> <p>2009/10 achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards Committee feature articles in summer 2009, autumn 2009 and spring 2010 editions of <i>South Cambs magazine</i>.</li> <li>• Chairman and Vice-Chairman met with Monitoring Officer, Chief Executive and the Leader.</li> <li>• Summer 2009, Winter 2010 and Spring 2010 editions of Standards Committee Newsletter sent to all Parish Councils in July.</li> <li>• Finalist for LGC Standards and Ethics Award 2010</li> <li>• Identified as national example of best practise for Independent Member recruitment process.</li> <li>• Chairman and Vice-Chairman's lunchtime</li> </ul>	

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			seminar with Council staff November 2009	
13.	Receive applications and make directions in relation to politically restricted posts under s3A Local Government and Housing Act 1989	Standards Committee	<p>On-going, carried forward into 2010/11. To be determined as and when an application is received. Standards Committee received report in March 2010 about new designation of politically-restricted posts following Local Government, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009</p> <p>No exemptions from rules concerning political restrictions were sought during any 2009/10 appointments.</p>	☺
14.	Overview of SCDC Whistle-blowing policy	Standards Committee	<p>On-going, carried forward into 2010/11</p> <p>2009/10 achievements: Chairman reminded staff of this policy during her lunchtime seminar in November 2009.</p> <p>Deputy Monitoring Officer contacted neighbouring authorities for details of their policies and whether or not they have had issues raised; comments reported to Standards Committee September 2009 and auditors and Standards Committee confirmed that existing policy was fit for purpose.</p> <p>Internal Audit Manager's Annual Report presented to Standards Committee 16 June 2010.</p>	☺
15.	Attendance at Standards Board Annual Assembly in October	Deputy Monitoring Officer and representative(s) of Standards Committee	Appointments to 2010 Annual Assembly to be determined by Standards Committee on 16 June 2010.	☺

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16.	Working with Council Officers	Standards Committee members, Chairman, Monitoring Officer, Deputy Monitoring Officer	On-going, carried forward into 2010/11  2009/10 achievements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To clarify responsibility for the protocol on member / officer relations and for amending it if necessary once the new Code of Conduct is in force (put on hold pending adoption of new Code of Conduct).</li> <li>Raising officers' awareness of the protocol and its correlation to the Code of Conduct</li> <li>Promotion of the Standards Committee's role and responsibilities – and clarifying which areas do not fall within its remit.</li> <li>Chairman and Vice-Chairman's lunchtime seminar with Council staff in November 2009</li> </ul>	
17.	Local Standards Committee Forum	Deputy Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services Team Leader, Chairman	On hold pending budget / legislative implications: to attract sufficient interest from neighbouring authorities, forum must provide value for attendees through keynote speakers, breakout sessions, training exercises, etc.	
18.	Appointments to Standards Committee 2010-14	Democratic Services Team Leader, Standards Committee Appointments Panel	22 July 2010.  Two district councillors appointed by Annual Council on 27 May 2010.  Three parish councillor nominations received: process has proceeded to a ballot in June 2010.  Seven application packs sent out to prospective independent members: deadline is 18 June 2010.	

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19.	Responding to proposals to abolish the Standards Board regime	Deputy Monitoring Officer, Standards Committee, Democratic Services Team Leader	Autumn / Winter 2010/11, depending upon Government schedule  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that, whatever legislative changes there might be, SCDC continues to take appropriate action to promote and maintain high standards of conduct among district and parish councillors</li> </ul>	
20.	Prepare annual report to Standards for England / Full Council	Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services Team Leader and Standards Committee	Spring 2011	