

Leeds City Council

Standards Committee

Annual Report
2009 – 2010



Introduction

The Local Government Act 2000 requires councils to set up a standards committee. Standards committees have a proactive role in creating an ethical framework which governs the relationship between high standards of conduct and transparency and openness in decision making. As a result of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008, the role of the Standards Committee also includes the local assessment of complaints made under the Member Code of Conduct.

This is the Committee's fifth Annual Report and it presents a summary of its work during the 2009-10 municipal year. This report supports the corporate governance arrangements of the Council by promoting good conduct and cascading information.

Our Ambition

“To help develop and maintain a climate of mutual trust and respect in which Members, officers and partners work effectively together to deliver the Council's strategic and operational priorities and where the public can be assured that this is done in an honest, objective and accountable way.”

Foreword from the Chair



I am pleased to inform you that Leeds City Council was announced as winner of the Standards and Ethics category at the Local Government Chronicle Awards 2010. The judging panel was impressed by the Leeds' approach to ethical governance within the authority, and its commitment to promoting and maintaining high standards of Member conduct. I am delighted that the work undertaken by the Standards Committee has been recognised in this way.

This year the Standards Committee has continued to meet and address the challenges of adapting to its local assessment role, and has also taken on a new role in assessing Politically Restricted Posts. I am sad to say that, having served eight years, I will be standing down as Chair and Independent Member of the Committee at the Council's Annual Meeting in May 2010. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to extend a warm welcome to my successor, Mr Gordon Tollefson, who I am sure will continue to drive forward the standards agenda in Leeds.

We hope you enjoy learning about the Standards Committee and its work throughout the 2009/10 municipal year.

Mike Wilkinson
Chair of the Standards Committee



Members of the Committee

The Standards Committee is composed of four independent members (and one reserve independent member for the 2009/10 municipal year), seven City Councillors, and three Parish Councillors.

Independent Members

The purpose of independent members is to help increase public confidence in ethical standards and provide a clear signal that the Standards Committee is fair. Independent members also bring a wider perspective to the Standards Committee from outside experiences. Independent members are not Members or officers of the Council, and are not actively engaged in local party political activity. They are appointed by the Full Council for terms of four years, and can serve two terms overall. This is to prevent them losing their independence from the authority.

Mike Wilkinson

has been an independent member and Chair of the Committee since 2002. He is also the Chair of the Standards Committee at the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority. Until 2001 he was a University Secretary and Clerk to the Board at Leeds Metropolitan University. He is a magistrate on the Leeds Bench and also acts as an Independent Assessor to the Student Loans Company. He is a Director of UNIPOL Student Homes. He will stand down at the Annual Meeting in 2010.



Rosemary Greaves

joined the Standards Committee in 2004 as a reserve independent member. Rosemary previously worked for BT as a Business Manager specialising in business development and strategy which includes developing significant new business propositions or identifying potential acquisition requirements. Rosemary became a full independent member in 2007 and her current term of office runs until the Annual Meeting in 2011.



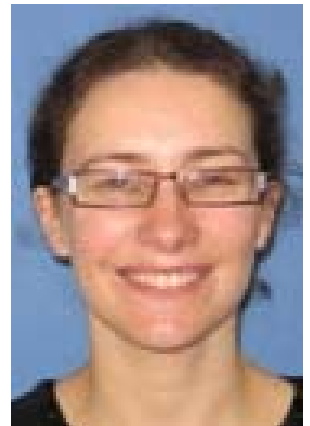
Philip Turnpenny

joined the Standards Committee in April 2008. Philip is the retired Director of Human Resources at Moores Furniture Group in Wetherby, where he is now Chairman of the Trustees of the Pension and Life Assurance Scheme. Philip is a Magistrate sitting in both the Adult and Family Proceedings Courts in Bradford, Chair of the Governing Body at Tadcaster Grammar School and Chair and Member of the Interim Executive Boards of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and Sherburn High School respectively. Philip also sits on the Board of Foundation Housing. Philip's current term of office runs until the Annual Meeting in 2012.



Joanne Austin

joined the Standards Committee in May 2009. Joanne worked at KPMG for 21 years in a variety of roles, and most recently as a Principal Advisor within the Financial Services Advisory Group. She has also recently completed a degree in Psychology from the Open University. Joanne's current term of office runs until the Annual Meeting in 2013.



Gordon Tollefson

joined the Standards Committee as a reserve independent member in May 2009. Gordon retired from the NHS in January 2006 where he worked as a Senior Ambulance Service Manager. He has served as a magistrate in Leeds since 1994 and chairs Courts on a regular basis. In 2008 he was appointed by the Ministry of Justice to the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee for Leeds, which is the body that handles all matters relating to standards, discipline and governance within the Leeds Magistrates' Courts. In February, Gordon was appointed as a full Independent Member of the Committee for a period of four years, commencing at the Annual Meeting in 2010, and as Chair of the Committee for the 2010/11 municipal year.



Leeds City Councillors

The Councillors on the Standards Committee are representatives of all five political groups within the Council. The Standards Committee is not politically balanced, this is because the standards committee should be above party politics and its members need to have the respect of the whole authority, regardless of their political party.

Councillor David Blackburn

is the Leader of the Green Group and represents the Farnley and Wortley ward on Leeds City Council. Councillor Blackburn is also a member of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and the City Centre Plans Panel.



Councillor Colin Campbell

is a member of the Liberal Democrat Group and represents the Otley and Yeadon ward on Leeds City Council. Councillor Campbell is also the Chair of Plans Panel (West), and a member of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.



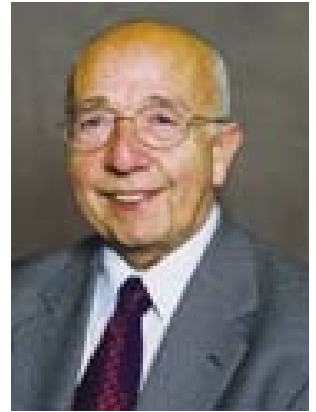
Councillor Les Carter

is a member of the Conservative Group and has been a Leeds City Councillor since 1973. He represents the Adel and Wharfedale ward on Leeds City Council and is also an Executive Board Member with responsibility for Neighbourhoods and Housing. Councillor Carter's areas of responsibility include housing policy and strategy, community safety, regeneration, homelessness and environmental health.



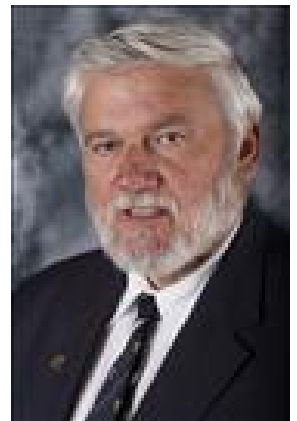
Councillor Ronald Feldman

is a member of the Conservative Group and represents the Alwoodley ward on Leeds City Council. Councillor Feldman is also a member of the Licensing Committee and the Children's Services Scrutiny Board.



Councillor Bob Gettings

is a member of the Morley Borough Independent Group and represents the Morley North ward on Leeds City Council. Councillor Gettings is also a member of the Children's Services Scrutiny Board and a member of Morley Town Council, on which he represents the Scatcherd Ward.



Councillor Janet Harper

is a member of the Labour Group and represents the Armley Ward on Leeds City Council. Councillor Harper is also a member of Plans Panel (West).



Councillor Brian Selby

is a member of the Labour Group and represents the Killingbeck and Seacroft Ward on Leeds City Council. Councillor Selby is also a member of the Licensing Committee, the Children's Services Scrutiny Board and he Chairs the East (Inner) Area Committee.

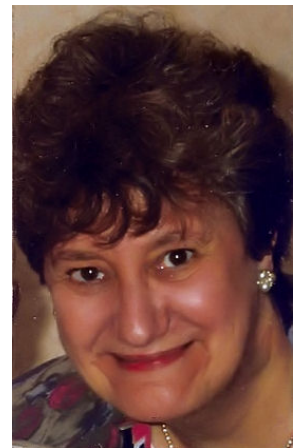


Parish Councillors

The role of the Parish Councillors on the Standards Committee is to make sure that the parish and town councils in Leeds are represented throughout discussions. At least one of the Parish Councillors must sit on the Standards Committee at all times when parish matters are being discussed. As the Standards Committee also has responsibility for the Parish and Town Councillors in the Leeds area, the Parish Councillors on the Standards Committee demonstrate that parish issues are going to be dealt with fairly. They also bring an additional independent perspective to the Committee as they are not able to be members of Leeds City Council.

Councillor Mrs Pat Walker

is a member of Pool-in-Wharfedale Parish Council which she was elected to for the first time 7 years ago. She is lead member on conservation matters. Previously a Harrogate District Councillor, she has been involved in politics at local, national and European levels. A business manager in Leeds and Harrogate for 25 years, she is now an active member of the Ruskin Society and is presently a Foundation Governor of Prince Henry's Grammar School, Otley. Councillor Walker's current term of office runs until the Annual Meeting in 2013.



Councillor John C Priestley

joined the Committee in 2005 as a reserve parish member and became a full member in 2007. He is a retired (litigation) solicitor and was a senior partner of Booth & Co. Leeds. He retired in 2002 and is now the Chairman of East Keswick Parish Council. He is also a Trustee of the W.W. Spooner Charitable Trust. Councillor Priestley's current term of office runs until the Annual Meeting in 2011.



Councillor Paul Cook

joined the Committee in 2009 as a full parish member. He was elected to Morley Town Council in 2007, and is currently the Deputy Mayor. He was a police officer for 30 years and retired in 1999. Councillor Cook's current term of office runs until the Annual Meeting in 2013.



Monitoring Officer to the Committee

Nicolé Jackson – Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) and Monitoring Officer

After qualifying as a solicitor at Calderdale Council, Nicolé worked at Bradford and Kirklees Councils, prior to moving to Leeds in June 1990. Nicolé became Senior Assistant Director and subsequently Chief Legal Officer in 1994 and 1999 respectively, and was appointed to her current role of Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) in 2007. Nicolé is also a part time Chair of the Midland Rent Assessment Panel.



Introduction to the Standards Committee

The general functions of the Standards Committee are:

- ▶ Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted members; and
- ▶ Assisting Members and co-opted members to observe the Code of Conduct.

The terms of reference for the Committee are:

- ▶ Promoting, monitoring and reviewing the rules controlling the behaviour of Councillors and Officers (Code of Conduct);
- ▶ To initially assess and review complaints against Leeds City Councillors and Parish and Town Councillors in Leeds and to decide what action (if any) to take;
- ▶ To consider the results of any investigation into the behaviour of Councillors and decide whether their behaviour has broken the rules described above. If the Councillor is found to have broken the rules, the Committee decides what punishment to impose;
- ▶ To make suggestions to and work with other agencies about standards issues and the different codes of conduct. This involves taking part in research projects and consultation exercises, as well as making suggestions for improvement and best practice to Standards for England;
- ▶ To provide advice and guidance to Members and officers and to make arrangements for training them on standards issues; and
- ▶ To advise the Council about changes which need to be made to the code of conduct for Officers and to promote, monitor and review this code.
- ▶ To consider applications to include or remove a post from the Council's list of Politically Restricted Posts.

The Work of the Committee 2009 – 2010

Promoting, monitoring and reviewing the Codes of Conduct

The Standards Committee exists to promote and maintain high standards of conduct within the Council, and has considered several important standards issues over the past year.

► **Reviewing the Codes and Protocols** - The Standards Committee has responsibility for several codes and protocols in the Constitution. To ensure that these are operating effectively, are being complied with, and are fit for purpose the Standards Committee has added regular reports regarding these codes and protocols to its work programme. This year the Standards Committee has reviewed:

- the Monitoring Officer Protocol; and
- the Standards Committee Media Protocol.

The Council's Member Management Committee is currently undertaking a review of the Local Codes and Protocols that affect elected Members, therefore the consideration of these Protocols by the Standards Committee will be delayed until the next municipal year.

The Committee also reviewed its own Procedure Rules in October in order to make them more accessible to subject Members and complainants, and to more accurately reflect the distinct roles of the Standards Committee and its Sub-Committees throughout the complaints process.

► **Ethical Audit** - Through the results of the ethical audits carried out in 2006 and 2007, the Standards Committee identified a general lack of awareness and understanding amongst officers of the ethical framework. As a result the Committee requested that work be carried out by Human Resources to create a new ethical framework training and awareness programme for officers. A progress report was presented to the Committee in July 2009, which detailed some of the

activities undertaken such as including ethical governance questions in the Staff Survey and the 360 degree appraisals for senior officers. A report detailing the results of these ethical governance questions was presented to the Committee in February 2010, and concerns were expressed as the results did not appear to have improved since the Ethical Audit was undertaken. The Committee has therefore been provided with a list of actions that will be implemented in order to address the results.

- ▶ **Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality** - The Standards Committee seeks to reassure itself that the Members' register of interests is being reviewed and updated by Members on a regular basis and that the rules surrounding the registration of gifts and hospitality are being observed. The Committee receives annual reports to this effect, the last report on this subject having been considered on 8th July 2009. The Standards Committee was satisfied that the review arrangements in place are fit for purpose.
- ▶ **Officer Code of Conduct** - The Standards Committee received a report in October 2009 from Human Resources which proposed some amendments to the Council's Officer Code of Conduct, given the delay in the release of a national Code for officers. The proposed amendments, which were supported by the Committee, will bring the Code up-to-date, particularly in respect of organisational changes and technological advances.

Impact

By seeking assurance that the Codes and Protocols are fit-for-purpose and effectively promoted, the Committee has ensured that high standards of ethical governance exist throughout the authority, and that any issues, for example the results of the Staff Survey, are addressed.

Local Assessment of Complaints

Since May 2008, the Standards Committee has had responsibility for initially assessing and reviewing complaints against Leeds City Councillors and Parish and Town Councillors in the Leeds area.

- ▶ **Assessment and Review Sub-Committees** – The table below shows the number of complaints which have been made about Councillors in Leeds during this municipal year, and the number which have been referred for further investigation. The Assessment Sub-Committee has considered a total of 13 complaints. The Review Sub-Committee has considered 6 review requests, and the decision to take no further action was upheld in all cases.

Authority	Number of Complaints	Number of Councillors referred for investigation	Number of Councillors referred for other action
Leeds City Council	12	5 (3 of which are ongoing)	0
Parish and Town Councils	1	0	0

The Standards Committee aims to assess and review complaints within an average of 20 working days. During the 2009/10 municipal year, complaints were assessed in an average of 21 working days. This is due to two complaints which took 37 and 34 working days to be assessed, as further clarification had to be sought. Without these two complaints, the average is 19 working days.

Review requests were considered in an average of 39 working days. This was due to difficulties in some cases in achieving a quorum for the Review Sub-Committee. However, all review requests were considered within the statutory 3 month deadline.

Six investigations have been completed during the municipal year, and were completed within an average of 10 months.

- ▶ **Consideration and Hearings Sub-Committees** – In July, the Committee agreed to set up a Hearings Sub-Committee to determine complaints made against Members, and in December a Consideration Sub-Committee was created to receive and consider final investigation reports. This year, four final investigation reports were received which contained a finding of no failure, and this finding was accepted by the Consideration Sub-Committee in all cases. Two reports were received which contained a finding of failure (one of which also contained a finding of no failure, which was accepted by the Consideration Sub-Committee), and were referred to the Hearings Sub-Committee for determination. *(To be updated following the Hearings Sub-Committee meetings.)*
- ▶ **Local Assessment Progress Reports** – The Committee receives reports on a six monthly basis, which provide an update on all complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct. The Committee is meeting the statutory deadlines in relation to the assessment and review of complaints, however concerns were expressed in relation to the time taken to complete investigations. In order to address this, a Procedure for External Code of Conduct Investigations was introduced. In February, the Committee was informed that the time taken to complete investigations had reduced as a result of the procedure.
- ▶ **Review of Local Assessment Arrangements** – The Standards Committee reviews the local assessment arrangements on an annual basis. In December, a questionnaire was sent to all City and Town and Parish Councillors seeking their comments on the local assessment process, including whether they wished to be notified that a complaint had been made against them prior to the meeting of the Assessment Sub-Committee. As the majority of respondents had indicated that

they did wish to be informed as soon as possible, the Committee agreed that subject Members should be notified prior to the meeting of the Assessment Sub-Committee, but that Members should be provided with the opportunity to opt-out of this process if they wish. Several other issues were raised during the review, however as most of these related to the content of the relevant legislation, it was agreed that the comments received should be forwarded to Standards for England and Communities and Local Government.

- ▶ **Training and Guidance for Members of the Sub-Committees** – In February, the Committee reviewed its training plan, and further to a recommendation by Corporate Governance and Audit Committee, it was agreed that members should be required to attend the relevant training prior to sitting on the Assessment, Review, Consideration and Hearings Sub-Committees.

Impact

By reviewing its local assessment arrangements, the Committee has been able to make amendments where possible to take Members' views and any arising issues into account. The Committee has also satisfied itself that it is meeting its obligations under the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008 by receiving six monthly update reports on complaints received.

Providing Guidance and Training

The Standards Committee has a special responsibility for ensuring that Members are trained in matters relating to the Code of Conduct and arranging for appropriate training to be provided. As there wasn't a local election in 2009, the Committee has not been provided with information in relation to the Code of Conduct training provided to Elected Members.

- ▶ **Governance Matters** - The Standards Committee features heavily in the regular bulletin 'Governance Matters' which is distributed to all Members of the Council, Directors, Chief Officers and all officers within Legal, Licensing and Registration, Procurement and Democratic Services. This bulletin contains a 'spotlight on' section which provides advice on specific standards or governance issues, front page news and feedback from the Council's governance committees. Past issues are available to download from the Council's website¹.
- ▶ **First-Tier Tribunal (Local Government Standards in England): Decisions of Case Tribunals** – The Committee receives regular reports summarising the decisions of case and appeals tribunals made by the First-Tier Tribunal (Local Government Standards in England) in its role of determining allegations of misconduct. The Committee assesses whether there are any lessons to be learned from the decisions in relation to the training and guidance provided to Members in Leeds.

Impact

By training Members and officers on standards issues, the Committee is adhering to the Council's Code of Corporate Governance by helping to foster a culture of behaviour based on ethical principles and good conduct.

1

http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Council_and_democracy/Councillors_democracy_and_elections/Council_documents/Governance_Matters_Newsletter.aspx

Relationship with Parish and Town Councils

The Standards Committee has sought to develop its relationship with the Parish and Town Councils in the Leeds area during this municipal year.

- ▶ **Addressing the results of the Annual Audit** – A questionnaire was sent to Parish Clerks at the end of October 2007 to assess the ethical arrangements in place at their Parish or Town Council, the results of which were presented to the Committee on 16th October 2008. The Monitoring Officer, Chair and Parish Members of the Committee then met to discuss the results in detail and agree on the actions to be taken. The results of this meeting were reported to the Committee on 8th July 2009.
- ▶ **Parish and Town Council Liaison Forum** – A report was submitted to the meeting of the Parish and Town Council Liaison Forum which took place in October, which provided an update on ethical governance.

Impact

The Committee has assisted the Town and Parish Councils in meeting the requirements of the Code of Conduct, and is therefore helping to reduce the number of complaints received against Town and Parish Councillors and in turn the negative impact that this can have on the public's perception of ethical standards within Councils.

Politically Restricted Posts

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 amended the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, transferring powers in relation to politically restricted posts from an Independent Adjudicator to Standards Committees.

- ▶ **Procedure for Politically Restricted Posts** – In August 2009, the Committee considered a proposed procedure for the consideration of politically restricted posts. The Committee raised several queries in relation to the procedure, including how political restriction would be dealt with as part of the Council's recruitment process and how the list of restricted posts would be reviewed and monitored. A further report was therefore submitted to the Committee in October to address these issues. Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, the rate of remuneration is no longer applicable to restricted posts. Therefore, the Committee will receive a further report in the new municipal year outlining an amended procedure and list of restricted posts.
- ▶ **Applications for exemption from Political Restriction** – The Committee has received one application for exemption from the list of politically restricted posts, in relation to the post of Economic Policy and Information Manager. The Committee was informed that this role does not involve reporting to Council Committees or the Executive on a regular basis, and it was therefore resolved to remove this post from the list of restricted posts.

Impact

The Committee has ensured that it is meeting its obligations under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and has ensured that its procedure for considering applications for exemptions from or additions to the list of restricted posts is fit for purpose.

Working with Other Agencies

During the year, the Standards Committee has continued to take part in research and policy development on a national scale through various consultation exercises.

- ▶ **Local Government Chronicle Awards 2010** –Leeds City Council was announced as the winner of the ‘Standards and Ethics’ category of the Local Government Chronicle Awards 2010. The judging panel was impressed by the Council’s commitment to high standards, and the innovation and hard work put into areas such as communicating standards and engaging leadership.
- ▶ **The Centre for Local & Regional Government Research** - In March 2008, Standards for England commissioned Cardiff University to assess the impact and effectiveness of the ethical framework in local government. The research is being carried out over five years using in-depth case studies of nine local authorities. Leeds City Council was selected to take part and accepted. It will focus on the impacts of standards frameworks on processes, systems, cultures and values within local government. The project will also use public surveys and focus groups to explore any impacts of local standards frameworks on levels of public trust in local government.

Case study work is being conducted with Councils at two-yearly intervals, the first round of which took place in September 2008. This included interviews being conducted with Members, key officers, local stakeholders and public focus groups. The second round of interviews will take place in Summer 2010.

- ▶ **Standards for England** - The Chair and a Parish Member of the Committee attended the Eighth Annual Assembly of Standards Committees held by Standards for England on 12th and 13th October 2009, which provided an opportunity for training and guidance and also feedback to Standards for England on their work. The Chair of the

Standards Committee was also a member of the steering committee for this year's conference, and was a speaker on the features of highly effective standards committees. The Monitoring Officer also attended and co-presented a workshop on managing investigations with confidence.

The Standards Committee is kept up to date on national conduct issues by receiving regular Standards for England Bulletins and issues of the Town and Parish Standard. The Standards Committee also received and considered Standards for England's Annual Review at its meeting in December 2009.

In 2009, Standards for England introduced the Annual Return, which all standards committees are required to complete. It asks questions on topics such as the role of the standards committee, what the committee does to promote standards, and Member/officer relations. The Annual Return for 2010 is attached at **Appendix 1** for information.

- ▶ **Association of Independent Members of Standards Committees in England (AIMSce)** - The Chair of the Standards Committee is a Director of AIMSce. The Association provides support and guidance to independent members in carrying out their statutory responsibilities, and also acts as a forum for exchanging views and ideas with other organisations and stakeholders.

Impact

The Committee has ensured that it is kept up-to-date on national developments within the standards regime, and that the views of Members and officers in Leeds are taken into account through correspondence with Standards for England and Communities and Local Government.

Issues for 2010 – 2011

The Standards Committee will have many important issues to address in the coming the year, including the following:

- ▶ **Member and Officer Codes of Conduct** – Communities and Local Government have advised that a new Member Code of Conduct will not be released prior to the general election. The Committee is therefore anticipating the release of a new Code of Conduct in the coming municipal year, as well as the release of a further consultation document in relation to the Officer Code.
- ▶ **Induction of the new Chair** – The current Chair of the Standards Committee, Mike Wilkinson, ends his final term of office at the Annual Meeting in 2010. The Council has appointed Mr Gordon Tollefson (who is currently a reserve Independent Member) as Chair for the 2010/11 municipal year. Mr Tollefson has already spent some time shadowing the current Chair to prepare for the role.
- ▶ **Recruitment Process** – The Committee will consider proposals for amending its process for recruiting the Chair of the Committee, and Independent Members.
- ▶ **Increasing understanding of local assessment** – Through the review of its local assessment procedures, the Committee has become aware that there are some concerns and misunderstanding amongst elected Members in relation to the complaints process. Action will therefore be taken to address this, for example by creating a list of Frequently Asked Questions, and the Monitoring Officer will also offer to attend political group meetings to discuss the process.

Useful Links

If you would like to find out more about standards issues and the work of the Committee, as well as keep up to date with national issues, you may find the following links useful:

- ▶ **Standards for England** (for guidance on standards issues, standards committees and outcomes of recent cases)
www.standardsforengland.gov.uk
- ▶ **The First-Tier Tribunal (Local Government Standards in England)** – <http://www.adjudicationpanel.tribunals.gov.uk/>
- ▶ **The Audit Commission** – www.audit-commission.gov.uk
- ▶ **Department for Communities and Local Government** – <http://www.communities.gov.uk/corporate/>
- ▶ **Leeds City Council** – www.leeds.gov.uk
- ▶ **National Association of Local Councils** – www.nalc.gov.uk
- ▶ **Yorkshire Local Council Association** -
www.visionwebsites.co.uk/Contents/Text/Index.asp?SiteId=490&SiteExtra=13134021&TopNavId=459&NavSideId=5536
- ▶ **Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy** – www.ipf.co.uk
- ▶ **Association of Independent Members of Standards Committees in England** – www.aimsce.org.uk

Parish Councils

The Standards Committee has a special responsibility to the Parish and Town Councils in Leeds. The Standards Committee is responsible for ensuring high standards of conduct are met within the parishes and that every Member is aware of their responsibilities under the code of conduct.

The Parish and Town Councils in the Authority's area are:

Aberford & District	Collingham with Linton	Morley
Allerton Bywater	Drighlington	Otley
Alwoodley	East Keswick	Pool-in-Wharfedale
Arthington	Gildersome	Pudsey
Austhorpe	Great and Little Preston	Scarcroft
Bardsey Cum Rigton	Harewood	Shadwell
Barwick in Elmet & Scholes	Horsforth	Swillington
Boston Spa	Kippax	Thorner
Bramham cum Oglethorpe	Ledsham	Thorp Arch
Bramhope and Carlton	Ledston with Ledston Luck	Walton
Clifford	Micklefield	Wetherby
Wothersome (Parish Meeting)		

The Monitoring Officer

In Leeds City Council, the role of the Monitoring Officer rests with the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance). The Monitoring officer has a key role in promoting and maintaining standards of conduct.

As well as acting as legal advisor to the Standards Committee, the Monitoring Officer carries out the following functions:

- ▶ reporting on contraventions or likely contraventions of any enactment or rule of law and reporting on any maladministration or injustice where the Ombudsman has carried out an investigation;
- ▶ establishing and maintaining registers of Members' interests and gifts and hospitality;
- ▶ maintaining, reviewing and monitoring the Constitution;
- ▶ advising Members on interpretation of the Code of Conduct;
- ▶ supporting the Standards Committee;
- ▶ receiving reports from Ethical Standards Officers and decisions of case tribunals;
- ▶ conducting and/or commissioning investigations into misconduct;
- ▶ performing ethical framework functions in relation to Parish Councils;
- ▶ acting as the proper officer for access to information;
- ▶ making arrangements for relevant matters to be considered by the Standards Committee with regard to initial assessment, review, consideration of final investigation reports and hearings, and to advise the Standards Committee on such matters;
- ▶ advising whether executive decisions are within the budget and policy framework; and
- ▶ advising on vires issues, maladministration, financial impropriety, probity, and budget and policy issues to all Members.



Annual Return form - 2010

Authority name Leeds City Council
Primary contact Nicole Jackson
Primary contact email nicole.jackson@leeds.gov.uk

PART 1: COMMUNICATION

Annual Report

Does the standards committee produce an annual report?

Yes

What does the report contain?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A personal statement by the standards committee chairman | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information about the members of the standards committee |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The role of the standards committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The standards committee terms of reference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information about the Code of Conduct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Statistical information about complaints that have been received |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information about the length of time taken dealing with complaints | <input type="checkbox"/> A summary of complaints which have led to investigation, sanction or other action |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Details about training/events provided | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The forward work plan of the standards committee |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Please describe what "Other" contents are in the report.

Key achievements of the Standards Committee throughout the year and what they perceive to be their challenges for the year ahead.

A list of the Parish and Town Councils in Leeds and web addresses where relevant.

A list of places to find further information.

Details about the role of the monitoring officer, and brief details of the officers who support the Standards Committee.

This year (Annual Report 2009 – 2010) we will also include information about the length of time taken in dealing with complaints, including the average time taken to complete initial assessment and the average length of investigations, and a summary of complaints which have resulted in a hearing.

How is the standards committee annual report circulated?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to all senior officers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sent to all members |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sent to parish/town councils | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available on the authority intranet |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available as a specific item on the authority website | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available in the standards committee papers published on the authority website |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included as a full authority meeting agenda item | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicised in local press |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distributed to households | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available at authority offices |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not circulated outside of the standards committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other |

The report is "Available as a specific item on the authority website", please provide the web address.

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD249&ID=248&RPID=692403&sch=doc&cat=519&path=467,519>

The report is "Available in the standards committee papers published on the authority website", please provide the web address.

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=104&MIId=3446&Ver=4>

Please describe the "Other" circulation methods.

This year (Annual Report 2009-2010) we will also be sending the Annual Report to

all senior officers and issuing a press release about the report.

Publicising Complaints

How can the public access information about how to make a complaint against a member?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Through a 'compliments and complaints' type section of the council website | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Through the standards committee section of the website |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complaints leaflets available from the authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Included as part of a council newsletter |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advertised through parish councils | <input type="checkbox"/> Information is not available to the public |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

The information is on the "'compliments and complaints' type section of the council website", please provide the web address.

http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Council_and_democracy/Councillors_democracy_and_electio

The information is on "standards committee section of the website", please provide the web address.

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=104>

Please describe the "Other" places the public can access this information.*

Posters were sent to Citizen's Advice Bureaux in Leeds and are displayed in all Council buildings, including one stop centres and libraries.

Also staff in the Council's Contact Centre are trained to forward complaints to the Monitoring Officer which concern the behaviour of Councillors.

How can the public access information about the outcome of initial assessment decisions?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Written summary available for public inspection | <input type="checkbox"/> All initial assessment decisions are publicised in the local press |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publicised in the local press only if the subject member agrees | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessment decisions published on the authority website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Articles published in the authority newsletter | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other |

Please describe the "Other" ways initial assessments are available.

The Assessment and Review Sub-Committees produce minutes of their meetings, as well as a case summary which is kept in Civic Hall and made available for public inspection. The minutes are published on the Council's website and as part of the Standards Committee agenda, and the full Council agenda. The minutes are anonymised and do not contain any details about the allegations.

How can the public access information about the outcome of investigations?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hearings are open to the public | <input type="checkbox"/> All investigation outcomes are publicised in the local press |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publicised in the local press only if the subject member agrees | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Published on the authority website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decision notices are available for public inspection | <input type="checkbox"/> Articles in the authority newsletter |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Please describe the "Other" ways investigation outcomes are available.

Minutes of the Consideration Sub-Committee meeting and an open covering report by the Monitoring Officer (which details the outcome of the investigation but not the names of the parties) are published on the Council's website. If the Sub-Committee decide it is in the public interest the full investigation report would also be published. If the Member has not breached the Code the notice would only be placed in the Yorkshire Evening Post if they agreed (as per Reg 17(4)). During the pre-hearing process the parties can request that all or some of the hearing is held in private. Such requests would be considered by the Hearings Sub-Committee and decisions made on a case by case basis. The written decision of the Hearings Sub-Committee would be published on the Council's website, with the minutes, and a notice is published in the Yorkshire Evening Post. If the Member did not breach the Code, they could request it is not published, as per Reg 20(2(b)).

Do you have a mechanism in place for measuring the satisfaction of all those involved

in allegations of misconduct? For example the member, complainant and witnesses.

Yes

If yes, please can you describe the process?

We carry out an annual survey of all Councillors and Parish and Town Councillors asking what they think to each stage of the complaints process and what improvements they would like to see. At the end of each complaint we also ask the subject Member and the complainant for feedback on the process. Both sets of results are reported to the Standards Committee on an annual basis alongside recommendations for how the process could be improved. This year's review led to the Council changing its approach to notifying Members that a complaint has been made about them before the Assessment Sub-Committee has met to consider the matter. The Standards Committee resolved that Members should have a choice about whether they are notified prior to the Assessment Sub-Committee meeting or whether they wish to wait until they can be given a summary of the complaint alongside the decision in the form of a decision notice. This was in response to concerns from some Members that the previous procedure had caused them particular worry or concern, which was later found to be unnecessary.

At the end of each hearing the Standards Committee is also required to review the relevant sections of the Standards Committee Procedure Rules in light of any issues that have arisen during the case.

Finally, the Assessment and Review Sub-Committees consider whether there are any lessons to learn from the cases they have considered at the end of each meeting. Any recommendations would be considered by the Monitoring Officer and appropriate changes made. For example, suggestions have been made regarding the amount of readily obtainable information provided with the complaint, and the format of the agenda itself.

Communicating the role and work of the standards committee and standards generally

What does the authority do to promote the work of the standards committee and standards generally to the rest of the authority (i.e. internally)?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dedicated standards committee pages on intranet | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee has its own newsletter / bulletin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Standards committee issues briefing notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Articles in employee newsletter / bulletin / newspaper |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee independent members observe other authority meetings | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee independent members contribute to other authority meetings |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Please give further details of the contributions made to other authority meetings.

The Chair of the Standards Committee is a co-opted non-voting Member of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee. This arrangement is set out in Article 9 of the Constitution.

Please describe the "Other" methods used.

Independent and Parish Standards Committee Members shadow elected Members of Leeds City Council by attending ward surgeries. This is part of the Standards Committee's Training Plan to help the external Members understand the role of a City Councillor.

The Chair of the Standards Committee meets with the Leaders of all the Political Groups and the Chief Executive on a quarterly basis with the Monitoring Officer. The minutes of Standards Committee meetings are received by the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee and Full Council. The Standards Committee also provide a six monthly update on their work to the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee (one of these reports is the Annual Report).

How can the public access information about your standards committee?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dedicated standards committee section on the authority website | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Within 'council and democracy' type section of website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical standards issues have been included in the local press / media | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee minutes, agendas, and reports are available to the public |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leaflets and/or posters are placed in public buildings | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Places articles in the authority newsletter / bulletin / other publication |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee meetings are observed by members of the public | <input type="checkbox"/> Information is not available to the public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Please provide the web address for the standards committee section on the authority website.

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=104>

Please provide the web address for information within the council and democracy section of your website.

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=104&Year=2010>

What else does the authority do to promote the work of the standards committee and standards generally to the public and other partners?

We publish our own bi-monthly newsletter called "Governance Matters" which highlights front page news and the regular work of the governance committees, as well as providing guidance on one key governance area per issue. This is available to the general public through the Council's website.

Our Chair is the Chair of the West Yorkshire Fire Authority's Standards Committee, a Director without Portfolio in the Association of Independent Members of Standards Committees in England, a member of the SfE's Annual Assembly Steering Group, and the Chair of the Yorkshire and the Humber Independent Members' Forum, raising the profile of the Standards Committee.

We work with other West Yorkshire authorities, particularly through our Monitoring Officer who has monthly meetings with her counterparts to discuss any ethical governance issues. Our Monitoring Officer led a session on "Managing Investigations" at the Annual Assembly which shared our experience in this area. The Chair and the Monitoring Officer also arranged the West Yorkshire Regional Standards Conference with their counterparts to share best practice.

Our Toolkit for Partnership Governance supports the Council's Framework for Significant Partnerships, and provides advice for partnerships on how to put in place codes of conduct and procedures for dealing with conflicts of interest. The Standards Committee have reviewed the toolkit.

We work with Parishes in Leeds through our Parish and Town Council Charter, Liaison Forum, and annual Spring Conference. This year our presentation at the Conference focused on local assessment and what a Member could expect if a complaint was made about them, reducing fears surrounding the process. We also send each Clerk a letter regarding every Standards Committee agenda highlighting matters of interest to Parish Councils.

The Committee has a communications plan which is kept under regular review to ensure it is communicating effectively with these different audiences.

PART 2: INFLUENCE

How does the standards committee communicate ethical issues to the senior figures within your authority (for example the Chief Executive and Leader of the Authority, Party Leaders)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Formal meetings between standards committee members and senior figures specifically set up to discuss standards | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal discussion on particular standards issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior figure attendance at standards committee meetings | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Officer is a member of or attends Corporate Management Team (or equivalent) meetings |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Executive or senior member has portfolio responsibility for standards | <input type="checkbox"/> Chair (or other standards committee member) addresses full authority meeting(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

How do the senior figures in your authority demonstrate strong ethical values?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Through a strongly promoted whistle-blowing policy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By ensuring there are references to ethics in the authority vision / objectives |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrating appropriate behaviours | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior figure(s) makes personal commitment to standards in statements to public/employees |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Through any other method | |

Describe the "Other" ways that this is achieved.

Our "Aspirational Culture" was launched last year at the "from good to great" leadership challenge event, bringing together the Council's leaders and helping them align their thoughts towards a common purpose by embedding key leadership messages. These messages included great governance, behaviours and values. This "Aspirational Culture" is now embedded across the Council, with standards and ethics forming an integral part of each element.

Does your authority have a protocol for partnership working that outlines the standards of behaviour expected of all those working in partnership?

Yes

What mechanisms does the authority use for dealing with member/officer and/or member/member disputes?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informal discussion/mediation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Officer mediation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chair of standards committee mediation | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior figure mediation (e.g. Chief Executive) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advice from Human Resources department | <input type="checkbox"/> Solicitor / legal adviser consulted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Informal hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> No mechanisms other than normal complaints process |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Describe the "Other" mechanisms used.

The procedure for Members and officers to follow when facing a breakdown in relations is outlined in the Protocol for Member / officer Relations. Members are told they can raise the issue with the officer if appropriate, otherwise they should raise the matter with the relevant Director. The Monitoring Officer would report any such behaviour by Members to the relevant Group Whip or Leader for them to take appropriate action. If an officer was found to have breached the Member / officer Protocol they may face disciplinary action.

PART 3: TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010, has the authority assessed the training and development needs of authority members in relation to their responsibilities on standards of conduct?

Yes

If yes, what needs were identified?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduction to the Code of Conduct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elements of the Code of Conduct |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The role and responsibilities of the standards committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ethical governance/behaviour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What training/support was provided during the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduction to the Code of Conduct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elements of the Code of Conduct |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Role and responsibilities of the standards committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ethical governance/behaviour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other |

Describe the "Other" training/support provided.

Training has been provided to certain Members on the governance and conduct issues surrounding Planning and Licensing decisions, and training has been provided for Standards Committee Members on how to assess complaints. There was also specific training provided on conducting hearings.

Who received training/support?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Independent members |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other standards committee members | <input type="checkbox"/> All authority members |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific authority members with particular needs (e.g. new members, planning committee members) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What methods were employed to give training/support?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal training (presentations/seminars/workshops) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External trainer/speaker |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One on one training | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joint/regional training event |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online learning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guidance notes/briefing materials |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards for England materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical governance toolkit |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Describe the "Other" methods used.

We have used written case studies which have been created specifically for the Planning and Licensing Training which focus on areas of the Code of Conduct and also predetermination and bias issues. We have also created case studies to be used in training for Standards Committee Members on the Local assessment of complaints.

In which areas of the Code of Conduct has training/support been provided?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Respect | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal/Prejudicial Interests |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use of resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bullying |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disrepute | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Predisposition, Pre-determination and bias |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Describe the "Other" areas covered.

All elements of the Code of Conduct.

What other training/support has been provided on areas of an authority member's role or activities they may engage in?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairing skills | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lobbying |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Predetermination, Predisposition and bias | <input type="checkbox"/> Blogging and/or the use of social media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electioneering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Freedom of Information (FOI) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other |

Describe the "Other" training/support provided.

Dealing with the media, public speaking, finance, ICT, equality and diversity, scrutiny, planning and licensing, corporate parenting, and risk management.

In general, how well attended was the training provided?

75% or more of those invited

Please give a brief overview of how standards issues are covered in your induction process for new members of the authority?

Members are provided with the copy of the Code of Conduct within their induction pack and guidance on how to complete their register of interests. Members then have a face to face training session on the Code, usually split into two sessions, one on general obligations and another on interests. These sessions are generally attended by the Monitoring Officer. Members are also provided with guidance from Standards for England and our own e-learning module on the Code. Election candidates are provided with a copy of the induction programme (including dates) in April so they can prepare to attend.

In which areas of the role and responsibilities of the standards committee has training/support been provided for standards committee members? Please tick all that apply.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initial assessments | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other action/mediation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reviews | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Investigations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hearings | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sanctions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Describe what "Other" areas were covered.

Training has also been provided to the Standards Committee on how to consider final investigation reports.

PART 4: INVESTIGATIONS

Have any investigations been completed during the period 1 April 2009 - 31 March 2010? Yes

How many investigations have been completed during this period?

6

Have any of the investigations used external investigators? Yes

Of the investigations completed during the period, for how many have external investigators been used?

6

Overall, what was your principle reason for out-sourcing the investigation(s)?

To complete the investigation sooner

What type of external investigator(s) did you use?

Employee of another authority

Self-employed investigator

Private law firm

Other

For the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010, what was the approximate total cost of fees paid to the external investigator(s) for completed cases?

£19000.00

Please provide a brief overview of the processes you have in place to ensure the quality of local investigations.

We have created and adopted a Procedure for external Code of Conduct investigations which places strict requirements on the investigator keep the authority informed on the progress of the investigation. This includes regular updates with one point of contact within the authority, and the requirement to produce detailed investigation plans and reviews (including details of interviews to be conducted). The procedure makes the terms of the delegation clear and gives points of contact for queries during the investigation. The draft report is also forwarded to the Monitoring Officer before being sent to the parties for comments, so that any areas of disagreement can be dealt with. We also provide templates for reports and letters etc. so that the information presented to the Standards Committee is all of the same quality.

PART 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

Has your authority provided training for parish councillors during the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010?

Yes

If yes, what topics did the training cover?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Freedom of Information (FOI) | <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential information |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Lobbying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dual-hatted members | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Code of Conduct generally |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal and prejudicial interests | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bullying |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

What "Other" topics did the training cover?

Training on the local assessment process and the role of the Standards Committee
Access to Planning Information
New Regional Working Arrangements
Customer Services - What We Do
The Power to Promote Well-being
The Future of Development Sustainable Communities
Rights of Way

What methods were employed to give training/support?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal training (presentations/seminars/workshops) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External speakers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> One on one training | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joint/regional event |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guidance notes/briefing materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards for England's materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CALC speakers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part of wider parish liaison meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

In general, how well attended was the training for parish councillors?

0-25%

Has your authority provided training for parish clerks during the period 1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010?

Yes

What topics did the training for parish clerks cover?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Freedom of Information (FOI) | <input type="checkbox"/> Working with confidential information |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Lobbying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dual-hatted members | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Code of Conduct generally |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal and prejudicial interests | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bullying |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

What "Other" topics did parish clerks training cover?

Training on the local assessment process and the role of the Standards Committee
Access to Planning Information
New Regional Working Arrangements
Customer Services - What We Do
The Power to Promote Well-being
The Future of Development Sustainable Communities
Rights of Way

What methods were employed to give training/support to parish clerks?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> One on one training | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal training (presentations/seminars/workshops) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External speakers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guidance notes/briefing materials |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards for England's materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joint authority/regional event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

In general, how well attended was the training for parish clerks?

0-25%

Does your council have a COMPACT (a formal agreement with your county Association of Local Councils about supporting standards for parish and town councils in the area)?

Yes

Describe the relationship between your authority and your County Association of Local Councils in relation to standards. For example, how regularly do you interact with them? Are you involved in delivering joint training?

We have interacted with them in relation to the appointment of Parish Members of Standards Committee (roughly once a year), and in relation to training available to Parish Councils. We do not deliver joint training, but we do make Parishes aware that they can access training from the YLCA.

Standards for England and Teesside University are currently researching the role of the Parish Liaison Officer. Teesside University have created a brief questionnaire to assess the organisational background, functions and skills needed to carry out the Parish Liaison role. Does your authority have a Parish Liaison Officer?

Yes

Does the Parish Liaison Officer (or the person who fulfils the same functions) consent for the University of Teesside to contact them to complete a brief questionnaire about their role?

Yes

If yes, please provide contact details (where there are multiple Parish Liaison Officers, just provide one contact):

Name

Mr Ian Cornick, Resources and Projects Manager, Democratic Services

Contact address

4th Floor West, Civic Hall, Calverley Street, Leeds, LS1 1UR

Contact phone

0113 2243206

Email address

ian.cornick@leeds.gov.uk

What steps have you taken when dealing with parishes which have had problems with standards issues? For example, what preventative or capacity building work have you done with parishes?

Our Parishes have not generally experienced problems with Standards issues. As a result of the Annual Audit we are providing specific advice to Parish and Town Councils in standards issues, such as the registration of interests and recording of declarations of interests in meetings. We are considering working with one of our Parishes to assist them with improving their corporate governance arrangements, including having clear lines of accountability and publicising information.

Which of the following areas would you like Standards for England to produce additional guidance on to support your work with parishes?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lobbying | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Predetermination and bias |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning and interests | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dual-hatted members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |