



Report of Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance)

Standards Committee

Date: 13th July 2010

Subject: Members' Induction Period 2010

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Summary

1. It is part of the Standards Committee's responsibilities to make arrangements for training in matters relating to the Code of Conduct and local codes and protocols. This report makes Members of the Committee aware of the following issues relating to the Members' induction period:
 - New Members' declaration of acceptance of office and undertaking to comply with the Code of Conduct;
 - Information on the Members' register of interests; and
 - Training of Members.
2. Members of the Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Committee of the following issues:
- New Members' declaration of acceptance of office and undertaking to comply with the Code of Conduct;
 - Information on the Members' register of interests; and
 - Training of Members.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 It is part of the Standards Committee's responsibilities to review and make arrangements for training in matters relating to the Code of Conduct and local codes and protocols. This report therefore provides information about the Members' induction period for 2010.
- 2.2 On 7th May 2010, 22 Councillors were re-elected and 11 new Councillors were elected. All 33 Members were required to complete two pieces of paperwork within 28 days. These were:
- Their declaration of acceptance of office and undertaking to comply with the Code of Conduct; and
 - Their register of interests entry.
- 2.3 The new Members were invited to attend a series of training sessions on a variety of issues.

3.0 Main Issues

Declaration of acceptance of office

- 3.1 In Leeds, all 33 Members were required to complete the following pieces of paperwork within 28 days of their election or re-election:
- Their declaration of acceptance of office and undertaking to comply with the Code of Conduct; and
 - Their register of interests entry.
- 3.2 New Members were provided with all forms within their induction pack, which included instructions as to where documents should be handed in and the relevant deadlines for completion.
- 3.3 The completed declarations of acceptance of office and compliance with the Code of Conduct are retained by Democratic Services and stored in a book. Members were required to return their form by 27th May 2010 (prior to taking part in the annual meeting). All Members complied with this deadline.
- 3.4 A number of other meetings took place prior to the annual meeting that returning Members would be attending, for which they also needed to have completed the declaration of acceptance. A prioritised schedule was produced highlighting key dates and Councillor attendance. The Resources and Projects Manager coordinated the return of completed forms and was responsible for keeping all key stakeholders fully informed with an updated position statement.

Register of Interests

- 3.5 The completed register of interests forms are retained by Governance Services. Members were required to complete and return this form within 28 days of their election or re-election. 29 register of interests forms were received within the deadline, including all of the newly elected Members. 3 forms were received 3 days after the deadline, and 1 form was received 4 days after the deadline.
- 3.6 A system was used to help to ensure that Members complied with the deadline, as was used in previous years. The Corporate Governance Officer and Group Support Managers were involved in the process of issuing reminders to Members. The Monitoring Officer contacted the Members who did not return their form by the deadline to ask them to return it as soon as possible.

Training for Members

- 3.7 All newly elected and existing Members were invited to take part in a series of training courses during the induction period. This programme was advertised both prior to the election as well as by individual invite to the new Members, once they were known.
- 3.8 All newly elected Members have attended training on the Code of Conduct, including registration and declaration of interests. When the induction training has been completed, feedback will be sought as to whether any Members had difficulty in attending sessions and the reasons why, and these will be addressed as far as possible in preparation for next year's programme.
- 3.9 Governance and conduct training for members of Plans Panels and Licensing Committee will be held as part of the Member Learning Days which will be held on 24th September, 30th November, 26th January and 24th March.

4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1 Ensuring that all Members are aware of their responsibilities as Councillors, such as complying with the Code of Conduct, is essential for good governance. By providing training and assistance to Members, officers within Democratic Services help to ensure that all Councillors comply with their legal duties.

5.0 Legal And Resource Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal or resource implications to noting this report.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 It is part of the Standards Committee's responsibilities to make arrangements for training in matters relating to codes of conduct and protocols. This report makes Members of the Committee aware of several issues relating to the Members' induction period.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 Members of the Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

Background Documents

None