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**Report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services**

**Council**

**Date: 21<sup>st</sup> June 2006**

**Subject: Standards Committee Annual Report 2005/6**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**Specific Implications For:**

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Narrowing the Gap

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**Executive Summary**

1. The purpose of this report is to make the Council aware of the Standards Committee Annual Report 2005/6. The appearance of this report reflects the Standards Committee's concern to enhance awareness of its role and activities. This report provides an outline of the content of the report, which is attached at Appendix 1.
2. Members of the Council are asked to note the Standards Committee Annual Report 2005/6 at Appendix 1.

**1.0 Purpose Of This Report**

- 1.1 To make the Council aware of the Standards Committee Annual Report 2005/6. The report is attached at Appendix 1.

**2.0 Background Information**

- 2.1 It has been proposed that an annual report be submitted to the Council to outline the achievements of the previous year and plans for the year 2006/7. The appearance of this report reflects the Standards Committee's concern to enhance awareness of its role and activities. The final draft of the report was approved by the Standards Committee at its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2006.
- 2.2 At this meeting, it was also agreed that the annual report would be presented to the Council at the earliest opportunity.

### **3.0 Main Issues**

#### The Work of the Committee 2005 - 2006

- 3.1 The section about the work of the Committee in this municipal year is split up into four issue areas which reflect the Committee's terms of reference. The content of these sections is summarised below.
- 3.2 Promoting, monitoring and reviewing the codes of conduct
- Review of the register of Members' interests
  - Hyperlink to the Standards Board for England
  - Consideration of local complaints
  - Constitutional amendments
  - Review of Member/officer protocol
  - Officer code of conduct
  - Raising the profile of the Committee
- 3.3 Providing guidance and training
- Training for City Councillors
  - Parish Council training
  - Training the Committee
- 3.4 Corporate Governance issues
- Whistleblowing policy
  - Comprehensive Performance Assessment
  - Corporate Governance Statement
- 3.5 Working with other agencies
- Consultation
  - Independent members regional forum

#### Issues for 2006 - 2007

- 3.6 The potential work of the Committee for the next municipal year is summarised at the end of the report.

These issues are outlined below:

- new codes of conduct;
- implementation of Parish Council training;
- changes in Committee membership;
- changes in the role of the Standards Committee;
- launch of the ethical audit; and
- raising the profile of the Committee.

### **4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance**

- 4.1 There are no implications for Council policy.

4.2 Producing a report which details the Committee's work throughout the year and the key decisions it has taken promotes transparency in the Committee's actions.

4.3 The annual report is also a method by which Members and officers can be informed of the Committee's role and its inputs and outputs. This is an objective of the corporate governance communication plan which seeks to cascade regular information to Members and officers. The annual report will therefore make a fundamental contribution to the corporate governance arrangements of the Council.

## **5.0 Legal And Resource Implications**

5.1 There are no legal or resource implications.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

6.1 The publication of this annual report will support the Council's governance arrangements by promoting transparency in the Committee's actions and help fulfill the corporate governance communication plan.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 Members of the Council are asked to note the Standards Committee Annual Report 2005/6 as set out in Appendix 1.