

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 19 AUGUST 2008

REPORT BY THE DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER

9. TRAINING AND FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

RECOMMENDATION – that

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1.0 Purpose/Summary of Report

1.1 The Committee is invited to consider the proposed training event for its Members and to identify items for consideration at future meetings.

2.0 Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/Objectives

2.1 **Fit for purpose, services fit for you**

*Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.*

3.0 Background

3.1 Some Members of the Standards Committee will have received training on the Code of Conduct and related matters whilst newer Members may have received no training whatsoever.

3.2 Recent legislative changes have resulted in changes to the Code and introduced a locally based system for the assessment, referral and investigation and hearing of complaints of code of conduct breaches. There may therefore be a training deficit in respect of the latest legislative requirements for all Committee Members.

3.3 As this is the first meeting of the Committee under its new constitution, Members are invited to consider items they wish to consider at future meetings.

## 4.0 Training

4.1 The following is an outline of a proposed training event:

### ***Part 1: Standards Committee functions - presentation (approx. 20 - 30 minutes)***

*Overview of standards committee functions following changes made under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007:*

- *initial assessment*
- *review*
- *consideration*
- *hearings*
- *appeal*

*This would be a short presentation and would be tailored specifically for Members of the Standards Committee, providing an outline of the new regime from the time that a complaint is received by the authority, through to any potential appeal following a Standards Committee hearing.*

### ***Part 2: Role plays***

*The Committee will be provided with an agenda for each of the stages listed above (other than appeal) and requested to act as though they were the sub-committee and make decisions as to complaints and investigators reports. The agenda for the initial assessment and review stages will have 4 complaints for consideration and decision, and will raise various issues such as requests for confidentiality by the complainant, possible withdrawal of complaints. Due to the limited time available, generally one or two of the complaints are considered for the assessment and review stages.*

*All members of the Committee will be asked to participate.*

### ***Part 2 - Role plays alternatives***

*Only the initial assessment and review stages will be role played, therefore allowing more time to be spent on more of the complaints.*  
*or*

*Only the consideration and hearings stages will be role played, therefore allowing more time to be spent on key issues.*

4.2 The training would be provided towards the end of September 2008. Neighbouring Authorities have been contacted to ascertain their interest in sending representatives to this training event.

4.3 The Committee's views on the proposed training event are sought.

#### 5.0 Items for future meetings

5.1 The Committee has no pre-defined work programme for the remainder of the Civic Year nor has it pre-scheduled meetings.

5.2 Members are invited to consider what items they would wish to consider at future meetings. For example, Members may wish to receive reports on: the adoption, by town and parish councils, of the Code; future training proposals for District and Parish/Town Councillors, and Member dispensations.

5.3 The Committee's views are sought.

#### 6.0 Consultation

6.1 None.

#### 7.0 Legal Implications

7.1 No legal implications.

#### 8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 None.

#### 9.0 Human Resource Implications

9.1 None.

#### 10.0 Risk Management Implications

10.1 None.

#### Background Papers

None

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