



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN

INTERNAL

<u>Message</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Distribution</u>	<u>Dates</u>
	<p><u>Members</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Specific Standards Committee web pages on the intranet.○ Governance & Standards Newsletter (intranet & e-mail distribution) including articles contributed by the Standards Committee Chair promoting the role of the Standards Committee. / Include a Governance and Standards section in existing bulletin that is sent to all staff and Members by e-mail.○ Induction Training covering the Council's ethical framework.○ Ongoing training including e-learning modules/DVD.		

- Three monthly e-mail reminders to members about Register of Interests and Register of Gifts and Hospitality.
- At Standards Committee meetings, consideration of a real life case study of standards issues from another authority to enable members to discuss what can be learnt from the situation and applied at Northampton Borough Council.
- Reviewing the channels of public access to information on the Members' Register of Interests.
- Standards Quiz conducted periodically to promote awareness of the Council's ethical framework and identify obvious gaps in knowledge. (All Members to be included, not just Members of the Standards Committee).
- Standards Committee Chair to meet with the political group leaders to raise the profile of standards and the ethical agenda.
- Chair or other member of the Standards Committee to address full Council to communicate ethical issues.
- Standards Committee Annual Report.

Officers

- Specific Standards Committee web pages on the

	<p>intranet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Governance & Standards Newsletter (intranet & e-mail distribution) including articles contributed by the Standards Committee Chair promoting the role of Standards Committee. / Include a Governance and Standards section in existing bulletin that is sent to all staff and Members by e-mail.○ Induction training covering the Council's ethical framework appropriate to the officer's position and seniority.○ Away days and ongoing training.○ Cover the Standards Committee's work in team meetings to raise awareness.○ Chief Executive covering ethical issues, role of Standards Committee etc. at Management Board.○ Internal promotion of the whistleblowing procedure.○ Appointment of lead officers to act as governance champions to promote high standards and advise on issues such as contract procedure rules, gifts and hospitality and whistleblowing.○ Standards Quiz conducted periodically to promote awareness of the Council's ethical framework and identify obvious gaps in knowledge.		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Place advert detailing the process for making complaints against councillors on employee payslips. ○ Standards Committee Annual Report. 		
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EXTERNAL

<u>Message</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>Distribution</u>	<u>Dates</u>
	<p><u>External stakeholders including the general public</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specific Standards Committee web pages on the internet. ○ Posters in parts of Council buildings open to the public eg. the One Stop Shop briefly outlining the functions of the Standards Committee. ○ Press releases/interview with members of the Standards Committee in local newspapers. ○ Letters and notices to all local Citizens' Advice Bureaus to raise awareness of the local assessment process. ○ Articles in newsletters sent to residents' associations and local community groups or 		

	<p>Governance and Standards newsletter to be sent to these groups with any other correspondence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Standards Committee Chair or Monitoring Officer to give short presentations at Neighbourhood Partnership meetings or the new Neighbourhood Management meetings when in place about the role of the Standards Committee. (This is a way of reaching the general public and Parish Councillors who also attend these meetings).○ Engaging with local youth to raise awareness eg. art competition open to local young people to produce a poster to raise awareness of the Standards Committee.○ Engaging with local youth to raise awareness through creating links with the University of Northampton Eg. talks by the Monitoring Officer or the Standards Committee Chair to law students on ethical governance in local authorities. Or, university art department asked if it will produce posters that could be displayed in all Council buildings about the Standards Committee.○ Putting a Standards Committee bulletin in the One Stop Shop.○ Creation of a paper leaflet on making a complaint about a councillor for people who do not routinely have access to electronic communications.		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Council hosting a Standards Conference for local Monitoring Officers and Members of Standards Committees to share experiences.○ Creation of a local online standards forum for local Monitoring Officers and Members of Standards Committees to share experiences.○ Taking advantage of any local radio opportunities to take part in discussion forums or interviews which would help communicate the Standards Committee's messages.○ Using Local Democracy Week (Autumn) as a platform to raise awareness of the work of the Standards Committee agenda.○ Monitoring Officer and Independent Members of the Standards Committee going out to visit parishes to engage them in the ethical agenda.○ Ensuring each Parish Council has a link on its website to the web pages of Northampton Borough Council's which explain how to make a complaint about a councillor.○ Carry out a survey of the understanding and attitude of each of the Parish Councils to the Model Code of Conduct for Members.○ Governance and Standards newsletter to be sent	
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	<p>to Parish Councillors (electronically).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Flyer publishing the complaints process to be sent to households with their Council tax bills.○ Distribution of leaflets publicising the local assessment of complaints process to local post offices.○ Development of a policy on dealing with the media in relation to standards complaints.○ Consultation of key stakeholders on the Standards Committee's Work Plan.○ Distribution of flyers on ethics and standards and attendance of Chair of Standards or other Standards Committee Members at the Diversity Festival at University of Northampton (14th – 18th March 2011).○ Have a stand on ethics and standards at the Northampton Borough Council's Youth Forum Equality Celebration (which is linked to the Youth Parliament) to be held in February/March 2011 (to be confirmed). Distribution of flyers and attendance of Chair of Standards or other Standards Committee Members.		
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