

Appendices: 0



**NORTHAMPTON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Councillor Training Strategy – ethical and governance matters</b>
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**AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC**

<b>Committee Meeting Date:</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2015
<b>Policy Document:</b>	No
<b>Directorate:</b>	Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer

### 1. Purpose

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- 1.1 The purpose of this Report is to seek the views of the Standards Committee on the training requirements of Members of the Committee and other Councillors in relation to ethical and governance matters.

### 2. Recommendations

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The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 consider the level and type of training that Members of the Committee require on ethical and governance matters and advise the Monitoring Officer accordingly;
- 2.2 establish a Working Group to consider the training requirements of all Members of the Council in relation to ethical and governance matters within the remit of the Standards Committee and devise a Training Strategy, which also includes consideration of the extent to which such training should be extended to Parish Councils within the Borough; and
- 2.3 nominate members of the Standards Committee to the Working Group referred to in paragraph 2.2.

### 3. Issues and Choices

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#### 3.1 Report Background and Issues

- 3.1 The Standards Committee is the Committee responsible for promoting and maintain high standards of conduct by the Members and co-opted Members of the Council, for assisting members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct and for promoting high ethical standards within Parish Councils. Within its terms of reference the Standards Committee can also undertake any action that improves, promotes, safeguards and facilitates the highest standard of probity and ethical conduct by the Council, its Members and Officers and advise the Council on ethical aspects of good governance standards for public life.
- 3.2 Further, Members of the Standards Committee may also be required to participate directly in the process for dealing with allegations that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct if a Hearings Panel of the Committee is established following an investigation into an alleged breach of the Code.
- 3.3 Therefore, it is important that individual Members of the Standards Committee are themselves adequately trained in ethical and governance matters to enable them to act as effective Members of the Committee.
- 3.4 Members of the Standards Committee are therefore asked to consider the level and type of training that they require as a Committee, on ethical and governance matters and advise the Monitoring Officer accordingly (taking into account the fact that there are new Members on the Committee, some of whom are also newly elected to the Borough Council).
- 3.5 In May 2015, following the election of the new Council, external trainers Hoey Ainscough Associates Limited provided a training session which was open to all Councillors. The training covered the Members' Code of Conduct, issues surrounding the identification and declaration of interests, the Arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints and a brief section on bias and predetermination in decision making. This introductory session may have identified topics about which Members wish to receive further detailed training about.
- 3.6 It is also recommended that the Committee establish a Working Group to consider the training requirements of all Members of the Council in relation to ethical and governance matters within the remit of the Standards Committee and devise a Training Strategy, which also includes consideration of the extent to which such training should be extended to Parish Councils within the Borough.

## **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **4.1 Policy**

- 4.1.1 There are no policy implications arising directly from this Report.

### **4.2 Resources and Risk**

4.1.2 There is some specific budget available for Member training. The anticipated cost of the training will need to be assessed as the Working Group develops the Training Strategy.

### **4.3 Legal**

4.3.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this Report.

### **4.4 Equality**

4.4.1 There are no equality considerations arising directly from this report.

### **4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)**

4.5.1 Not applicable.

### **4.6 Other Implications**

4.6.1 None.

## **5. Background Papers**

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None.

**Marianne McCarthy**  
**Solicitor**