

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

STANDARDS & ETHICS COMMITTEE 22 NOVEMBER 2011

FORWARD PLAN 2011/12

AGENDA ITEM:

Purpose of the Report

1. To request the Standards and Ethics Committee to consider the proposed Forward Plan for forthcoming meetings of the Committee to March 2012 and to reflect on items previously considered by the Committee and any current relevant issues of interest for further consideration.

Background

2. The Standards and Ethics Committee's Terms of Reference provide the Committee with responsibility in the following areas:-
 - To monitor and scrutinise the ethical standards of the Authority, its Members, employees and any associated providers of the Authority's services and to report to the Council on any matters of concern.
 - To advise on the content and updating of the Council's Ethical Code and advise on the effective implementation of the Code.
 - To consider and determine the outcome of complaints in respect of breaches of the Code of Conduct.
 - To oversee and monitor the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and procedures.
 - To grant or refuse requests for dispensation in respect of Members' interests under the Members' Code of Conduct.
 - To hear and determine complaints of misconduct by Members.
 - To recommend to Council and the Executive any additional guidance on issues of probity.
 - To undertake those functions which are required by law in relation to Community Councils situated in the area of the Council and Members of those Community Councils.

Issues

3. The Committee has considered a number of topics from its 2010/11 work programme over the past year and a number of the actions have been completed. The Forward Plan has been updated to reflect this.
4. The Committee at its meeting on 27 September 2011 discussed the priorities and way forward for the future work of the committee and noted a request from a Member for Officers to explore the possibility of a review of the process for dealing with complaints including potential options for consideration by the Standards and Ethics Committee outside the formal referral process to the Ombudsman. The main points discussed centred around the following:
 - Complaints Process;
 - Use of Social Media;
 - Community Council Charter;
 - Officer Code;
 - Whistleblowing Policy;
 - Information for Prospective Councillors;
 - Local Democracy Week;
 - Ethical Framework and Governance.
5. The Committee agreed to retain the Hospitality Register, Meeting with Leaders and Whips and Planning Committee procedure rules as regular six monthly items.

Financial & Legal Implications

6. There are none arising from this report.

Recommendation

7. The Committee is requested to consider the revised Forward Plan for 2011/12 and advise Officers how it wishes to progress the proposed topics.

MELANIE CLAY

Chief Officer Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

16 November 2011

STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN OF PROPOSED ITEMS

NOVEMBER 2011 TO MARCH 2012

PRIORITY A

STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE – 22 NOVEMBER 2011

TOPIC	OBJECTIVE/OUTCOME	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	TIMESCALE
(1) All Wales Standards Conference 2011	To provide feedback from the All Wales Standards Conference 2011 which took place on 5 October 2011 in Llandrindod Wells, Powys.	Legal & Democratic Services	November 2011
(2) Process for Complaints About Members' Conduct	To review the process for dealing with complaints about Members' conduct and explore other potential options for consideration by the Standards & Ethics Committee outside the formal referral process to the Ombudsman	Monitoring Officer	November 2011
(3) Community Councils	To support the implementation of the proposed Charter between Cardiff Council and the six Community Councils in Cardiff	Legal & Democratic Services	November 2011

STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE – 31 JANUARY 2012

TOPIC	OBJECTIVE/OUTCOME	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	TIMESCALE
(4) Prospective Councillors	To provide information to prospective councillors or candidates which provides them with a clear understanding of their ethical obligations	Legal & Democratic Services	January 2012
(5) Meeting with Leaders and Whips	To provide ongoing engagement with representatives from all political groups	Members	January 2012
(6) Member Development	To inform the Council's member development programme and the induction programme for new Members following the local elections in May 2012, with specific reference to the Member Code of Conduct and the ethical framework	Legal & Democratic Services	January 2012
(7) Social Media	To receive a general presentation on the use of social media, including issues such as criteria for use; etiquette and safeguards	Legal & Democratic Services Communications	January 2011
(8) Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011	To consider the implications of the Local Government (Wales) Measure on the ethical framework and related governance issues.	Legal and Democratic Services	January 2011

STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE – 20 MARCH 2012

TOPIC	OBJECTIVE/OUTCOME	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?	TIMESCALE
(9) Member Appraisals	To consider the arrangements for the provision of appraisals or training needs assessments for Members in line with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011	Legal & Democratic Services	March 2012
(10) Gifts and Hospitality	To review procedure and register	Legal & Democratic Services	March 2012

PRIORITY B

TOPIC	OBJECTIVE	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIMESCALE
(1) Dispensations Policy	To review the policy for dispensations	Standards & Ethics Committee	Ongoing
(2) Officer Code of Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To review and improve the Officer Code of Conduct. - To support the dissemination of information and training to officers. 	Legal & Democratic Services HR-People Services Internal Audit	2012 – Date to be agreed
(3) Whistleblowing Policy	To review the policy and determine whether additional information and training is required to improve awareness of the policy is required	Legal & Democratic Services	Post May 2012 Elections

REGULAR SIX MONTHLY ITEMS

TOPIC	OBJECTIVE	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIMESCALE
(1) Hospitality Register	To consider update reports for information	Legal & Democratic Services	6 monthly (January 2012)
(2) Meeting with Leaders and Whips	To provide ongoing engagement with representatives from all political groups	Members	6 monthly – ongoing (January 2012)
(3) Planning Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To improve public perceptions relating to openness and transparency- To review procedure rules for continuous improvement	Legal & Democratic Services City Development	Ongoing (January 2012)