

# STANDARDS COMMITTEE

## MEMBER INDUCTION AND TRAINING 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2007

### Report of Head of Legal and Human Resources/Monitoring Officer

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Committee and seek views on the proposals for Member induction and training after the May elections.

**This report is public**

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

**(1) That the report be noted, and that Members' views be sought.**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 As Members will be aware, the terms of reference of the Standards Committee include the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct within the Council.

1.2 It is felt that the May elections and the proposed amendments to the Code of Conduct will combine to provide a welcome opportunity to raise the profile of the Committee and its work.

#### **2.0 Proposal Details**

2.1 Following the elections in May 2007, it is intended to provide general induction training for elected Members, followed by more specialised training relating to the work of the various Committees to which Members may be appointed.

2.2 At this stage, arrangements are in their preliminary stages, but it is proposed to hold two Induction Day sessions on Tuesday 8th May from 5.30pm - 8.30 pm at Lancaster Town Hall and Thursday 10th May from 10am -1pm at Lancaster Town Hall. These sessions would be open to both newly elected and returning members. At this stage there is no detailed outline for the Induction Day. There is likely to be an introduction by the Chief Executive covering the general structure of the Council, possibly followed by sessions on the Code of Conduct and declaration of interests, and on IT and other support available for Members.

- 2.3 One possibility is for food to be provided before/after the Induction Day, with a tour of the building, and perhaps the opportunity for each Service Head to have a stand/table so that Members can meet key officers and learn about the work of each department without having to listen to a series of presentations. It would seem that one way of raising the profile of the Standards Committee would be for the independent members of the Committee to be represented at the Induction Days, perhaps with a stand/table as a focus on the Committee's work. Members' views on this are sought.
- 2.4 It is anticipated that following the Induction Days, there will be a more detailed session for Members on Code of Conduct issues, and again it is felt that a contribution from the Chairman and/or the other independent members of the Committee might be useful especially for new members, and would give a different perspective from that given by the officer presentation. To enable all Members to attend, it is likely that such a session would be repeated at different times of the day, and the current proposals are for the sessions to be held on the 31st May (afternoon), 1st June (morning) and 4th June (evening).
- 2.5 Elected Members will be appointed to the various Committees of the Council at the Annual Council Business Meeting on the 21st May 2007, and following that, arrangements will be made for specific training for Standards Committee members. The independent members of the Committee will be included in this training, and this will provide the first opportunity for the new Committee to meet on an informal basis. This is likely to be on the 5th June 2007.
- 2.6 The Monitoring Officer also intends to contact the Lancashire Association of Parish and Town Councils (LAPTC) to arrange a training session on the new Code of Conduct for parish clerks and councillors after the May elections, and this may also be followed by visits to individual parish councils or groups of parish councils on request. The independent members of the Committee may wish to be involved in this area of work also.

### **3.0 Conclusion**

- 3.1 Members' views are sought, and in particular the views of the independent members of the Committee as to their input to the induction and training process.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is budgetary provision for the general induction training, and there are no financial implications arising specifically from this report.

#### **SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Legal Services have been consulted and have no further comments.

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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