

Item 3

ITEM NUMBER:

**REPORT TO
STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

17TH MAY 2004

REPORT OF MONITORING OFFICER

MONITORING OFFICER'S UPDATE REPORT 1

1. TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS

As reported to the last Standards Committee, training events, as part of the County Durham Standards and Ethics Roadshow, took place at the Parish Hall, Sedgefield, on the 18th September 2003, at Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre, on the 29th October 2003, and at the Council Chamber, Sedgefield Borough Council on the 17th November 2003.

Topics covered by the courses included: a review of the Standards and Ethics Framework under Part 2 of the Local Government Act 1972; the examination of the Role of the Monitoring Officer and the Standards Committee and its new powers in respect of determination; the examination of key points of the Code of Conduct for Members; the position of dual-hatted planning members and a presentation of the Standards Board's latest video was made.

A further feedback training session took place at the Council Offices, Sedgefield Borough Council on the 20th February 2004.

It is intended that a further training event will take place later this year.

2. WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Lack of resources and capacity have delayed the production of website based registers. However, recently further work has been undertaken and a Standards and Ethics link to the Council's website and intranet is likely to go live in the next few months.

3. ADVICE ISSUED SINCE LAST MEETING OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE ON THE 4TH NOVEMBER 2003

- MO27 : Standards Board Bulletin No. 14.
- MO28 : Notification of Bi-Annual Review of Registers of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality.
- MO29 : Standards Board Bulletin No. 15.
- MO30 : Information about Publications on Standards Issues.
- MO31 : Code of Conduct : Registers of Interests : Advice about Freemasonry and Political Organisations.

- MO32 : Standards Board Bulletin No. 17.
- MO33 : Links to currently available Standards Board advice.
- Standards Board Bulletin 19.

4. REVIEW OF REGISTERS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

5. TERM OF OFFICE OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

To note that at the Annual Council, reference will be made to the term of office of independent members: that tenure of independent members will subsist until May 2007 unless vacated before then. Vacant posts will be advertised in accordance with current regulations.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

To receive the information in this report.