

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Thursday, 1 November 2007

1.00 p.m.

Conference Room 1,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

AGENDA and REPORTS



This document is also available in other languages, large print and audio format upon request

العربية (Arabic)

إذا أردت المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، نرجو أن تطلب ذلك منا.

বাংলা (Bengali)

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

(中文 (繁體字)) (Cantonese)

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

हिन्दी (Hindi)

यदि आपको सूचना किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये तो कृपया हमसे कहे

polski (Polish)

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi)

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੰਗ ਲਓ।

Español (Spanish)

Póngase en contacto con nosotros si desea recibir información en otro idioma o formato.

اردو (Urdu)

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھیے۔

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To notify the Chairman of any items that appear later in the agenda in which you may have an interest.
3. **MINUTES**
To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th July 2007. (Pages 1 - 4)
4. **THE CODE OF CONDUCT - THE CODE UNCOVERED**
DVD Presentation.
5. **STANDARDS BOARD ANNUAL REVIEW 2006/2007**
Report of Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer. (Pages 5 - 10)
6. **STANDARDS TRAINING EVENT: WEDNESDAY 27TH JUNE 2007: EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK**
Report to Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer. (Pages 11 - 18)
7. **STANDARDS TRAINING EVENTS 29TH AUGUST, 5TH SEPTEMBER AND 26TH SEPTEMBER 2007: EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK**
Report of Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer. (Pages 19 - 26)
8. **SIXTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY - STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND - 15TH - 16TH OCTOBER 2007 - BIRMINGHAM**
Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer to report at the meeting.
9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
Next meeting to be held on 7th February 2008
10. **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**
Members are respectfully requested to give the Chief Executive notice of items they would wish to raise under the heading not later than 12 noon on the day preceding the meeting, in order that consultation may take place with the Chairman who will determine whether the item will be accepted.

Background Documents

Monitoring Officer's advice issued:

MO Series

- | | |
|------|--|
| MO86 | Town and Parish Standard from the Standards Board for England Issue 8 |
| MO87 | Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality: New Administration Arrangements for Parish and Town Councils with effect from 1st December 2006 |

- MO/88 Bi-Annual Review of Registers of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality
MO/89 Advice Note for Members of Regulatory Committees – Conflicts of Interest
MO/90 A Revised Model Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members
MO/91 Implementation of the Revised Model Code of Conduct for Members
MO/92 May 2007 Elections: Requirements for Parish and Town Councils
MO/93 New Code of Conduct for Members – Latest Guidance
MO/94 New Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils
MO/95 Fraud Awareness, Prevention and Detection Policy: Code of Practice for Members and Officers: Declaration of Interest in Benefit Claims
MO/96 Advice to Borough Council Members: Area Forums and the New Code of Conduct
MO/97 Members Planning Code of Good Practice
MO/98 Member Training Events
MO/99 Letter – Changes in Responsibilities effective from 17th September 2007
MO/100 Letter – Standards Board for England : Occasional Paper Issue 1 : August 2007 : Pre-disposition/Pre-determination or Bias and the Code of Conduct
MO/101 Standards Board Bulletin No. 35

MO/SBC Series

- MO/SBC42 Strategic Leadership Working Group – 4th January 2007 – Employment Issues – Advice from the Information Commissioners Office
MO/SBC43 Criminal Records Bureau Checks
MO/SBC44 Potential for Conflicts of Interest : Member and Officer Issues : Advising and Making Decisions on Joint Arrangements, External Arrangements, etc. – File Ref. A3243

MO/SBC/Cons Series

- MO/SBC/CONS/16 Constitution – Website
MO/SBC/CONS/17 Amendments to the Constitution approved at Council on 24th November 2006
MO/SBC/CONS/18 Publication of the Constitution approved at Council on 27th July 2007

B. Allen
Chief Executive

Council Offices
SPENNYMOOR

Mr. L. Petterson (Chairman)

Councillors A. Gray, T. Hogan, Mrs. L. Hovvels, Mrs. E. Maddison and J. Wayman J.P
Councillor J. Marr (Spennymoor Town Council)

Mr. I. Jamieson (Independent Member)

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection in relation to this Agenda and associated papers should contact
Miss. S. Billingham, Tel 01388 816166 Ext 4240, sbillingham@sedgefield.gov.uk

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Item 3

SEDGFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Council Chamber,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Thursday,
5 July 2007

Time: 1.00 p.m.

Present: L. Petterson (Chairman) and

Councillors A. Gray, T. Hogan, Mrs. L. Hovvells and Mrs. E. Maddison

Parish/Town Council member

Councillor J. Marr

Independent Member

Mr. I. Jamieson

Apologies: Councillor J. Wayman J.P

ST.1/07 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27th April, 2007 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

ST.2/07 COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE: ANNUAL REPORT 2006

Consideration was given to a report of the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer providing a summary of the Annual Report 2006, which was published by the Committee on Standards in Public Life. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members were reminded of the background of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, which was established in 1994.

An overview of the activities during 2006 were outlined in the report together with a number of standards issues including the Inquiry process, the Tenth Report, the Operation of the Ministerial Code, the New Civil Service Code, the System of Allowances and Expenses for Members of Parliament, Loans for Peerages, Electoral Fraud and Electoral Registration.

Members of the Committee welcomed the report, however, specific reference was made to 3.21 regarding Electoral Registration and eligible voters. It was questioned whether statistics regarding voters, eligible and non eligible could be made available for Sedgefield Borough. It was agreed that the queries would be taken back to the relevant officer in Electoral Registration Section.

AGREED : That the report be noted.

ST.3/07**STANDARDS COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN 2007/2008**

Consideration was given to a report of the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer outlining a number of areas that were to be considered at future Standards Committees. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Member's attention was drawn to Appendix 1, which outlined the forthcoming meetings and the items, which would be considered and how they related to the Standards remit. It was pointed out that there would be greater emphasis on guidance on the filtering of complaints at a local level. It was felt that there were a number of complaints that could be dealt with at a local level rather than by the Standards Board, unless further investigation was required.

Detailed discussion was held regarding the Constitution and when it would be published. It was explained that the Constitution was available on the website and updated regularly. A paper copy would not be published until after Council in July, 2007 as a number of changes were to be proposed.

Consideration was given to the format of the published Constitution where it was agreed that the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer would send a letter to all Members requesting their preferred format.

AGREED : That the report be noted.

ST.4/07**TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEMBERS: 2007**

Consideration was given to a report of the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer outlining the training arrangements for Members throughout 2007. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members were reminded that it was mandatory to attend at least one qualifying training event during the year.

The Committee was reminded of a number of training events that had taken place to date, including the Post Election Member Induction on Standards and Ethics on 10th May, 2007, Standards Board Roadshow – 12th June, 2007 and a training session which was facilitated by Peter Keith-Lucas of Bevan Brittan Solicitors which took place on 27th June, 2007.

A number of training sessions would be delivered to both Town and Parish Councillors and Borough Councillors, in the Autumn of 2007, by the Council's Monitoring Officer, which would be open meetings. There would also be a number of training sessions specifically for Borough Members including a screening of the Standards Board's Videos/DVDs and a presentation on Regulatory Committees later in the year.

AGREED : That the report and future training events be noted.

ST.5/07**STANDARDS BOARD ROADSHOW, 12TH JUNE 2007, NEWCASTLE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer summarising the above event attended by Standards

Committee Members held by the Standards Board on 12th June, 2007.
(For copy see file of Minutes).

The report outlined a number of views that were expressed during the training session including those on the revised Code of Conduct, Bias and Predetermination and Challenges faced during 2008.

AGREED : That the report and the views expressed therein be noted.

ST.6/07

ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION PART I

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive, which detailed the need to continually review the Constitution to ensure that it reflected existing law and its operation continued to provide an efficient and effective framework on the delivery of the Council's Aims and Objectives.
(For copy see file of Minutes).

The report outlined the revised Contract Procedure Rules that had been developed following meetings of a Review Group of departmental representatives from across the Council and advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer.

- RECOMMENDED :*
- 1. That Council be advised to approve the report.*
 - 2. That the Constitution be amended accordingly and make all necessary and consequential amendments.*
 - 3. That the amended version be published on the Council's website.*
 - 4. That Standards Committee facilitates a procurement training programme.*

ST.7/07

ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION PART II

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive which detailed the need to continually review the Constitution to ensure that it reflected existing law and its operation continued to provide and efficient and effective framework on the delivery of the Council's Aims and Objectives.
(For copy see file of Minutes).

Member's attention was drawn to the proposed changes to the Constitution outlined in the report.

- RECOMMENDED :*
- 1. That the Constitution be amended accordingly and make all necessary and consequential amendments..*
 - 2. That the amended version be published on the Council's website.*

ST.8/07

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

1st November, 2007 at 1.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Council Offices,
Spennymoor.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Miss. S. Billingham, Tel 01388 816166 Ext 4240, sbillingham@sedgefield.gov.uk

Item 5

ITEM NO.

REPORT TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

1ST NOVEMBER 2007

REPORT OF SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL AND MONITORING OFFICER

STANDARDS BOARD ANNUAL REVIEW – 2006/2007

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 New arrangements for Local Government are rapidly taking shape. The revised Code of Conduct has come into effect, providing greater clarity about the role of Councillors and removing many of the restrictions that have sometimes made it difficult for Members to speak up for their communities effectively.
- 1.2 The Standards Board Annual Review focuses on how the Board works with local authorities in order to ensure the success of the new framework. Over the last year, the Board has continued to work in close partnership with other government bodies and external organisations in pursuit of higher standards.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Standards Committee be appraised of the report.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The move to local investigation of complaints is continuing, with over half of all cases that need to be investigated, handled by local authorities. From research carried out by the Standards Board, a positive picture emerges of how local authorities are responding to the changes taking place.
- 3.2 Overall, there is a wide consensus that standards of conduct have improved since the Standards Board was established. Most encouragingly, there is strong evidence that local authorities, from Chief Executives and Political Leaders to Standards Committees and Monitoring Officers are embracing their new role as champions of high standards, and gaining confidence in their ability to play it effectively.
- 3.3 *One Year in Brief:* The majority of the Standards Board's recommendations were implemented by the Government, leading to the introduction of an improved, less restrictive Code of Conduct in May 2007.
- 3.4 The role of the Standards Board as a light touch regulator is clearly defined by the new Local Government Bill.

- 3.5 Over half of all investigations are now dealt with by local authorities, with improved support available from the Standards Board and there is a continued improvement in speed and efficiency of the Standards Board service, with major key performance indicators achieved.
- 3.6 Within the new more locally driven conduct framework, the Standards Board will continue to:
- oversee the Code of Conduct and make recommendations for change to the Government where necessary;
 - issue guidance;
 - carry out investigations that cannot be undertaken locally;
 - give advice and support on case handling and broader governance issues.
- 3.7 There are two ways in which the Standards Board will develop their role as a light touch, strategic regulator:
- 1) *Defining the framework:* As well as continuing to champion and promote high standards, the Board will take responsibility for defining what people can expect the standards regime to deliver, including the roles of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees.
 - 2) *Ensuring effective local performance:* Under the new standards framework, the emphasis will be on self-regulation, with Local Government being encouraged to resolve their own problems, with support from the Standards Board. The Standards Board will be putting monitoring arrangements in place to ensure that the local system is operating effectively, and will only consider withdrawing local case handling where there is clear evidence of local failure. It is important to stress that the Standards Board will be light touch, and that, they will not be adding significantly to the burden of regulation on authorities.
- 3.8 In total the Standards Board covers over 100,000 elected and co-opted Members, 3,549 allegations were received in 2006-07, 62% of the allegations were from members of the public, 19% of the complaints were referred for investigation and it took 9 days to decide whether to refer a complaint for investigation.
- 3.9 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill will make standards a truly local issue, reversing the centralism of the original Local Government Act 2000. The key provision is that local Standards Committees will be handed responsibility for receiving complaints and deciding whether they should be investigated.
- 3.10 This, in turn, will clarify the Standards Board's new role as a strategic regulator, with the responsibility to monitor and promote standards, and to support and oversee local authorities in their application of the Code. Only cases that cannot be handled locally, because of conflicts of

interest or because they raise issues of particular importance, will be dealt with by the Standards Board.

3.11 The main provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill that will effect the standards regime include:

- Standards Committees to be responsible for receiving allegations and deciding whether any action needs to be taken;
- Standards Committees to report periodically to the Standards Board;
- The Code of Conduct to cover private conduct where it constitutes a criminal offence for which the Member has been convicted;
- Standards Committees to be allowed to enter into joint working arrangements with other Standards Committees;
- The Standards Board to be responsible for monitoring and ensuring the effectiveness of local arrangements, including supporting authorities which are experiencing difficulties and driving up their performance.

3.12 The Standards Board is very keen to ensure that their response to the complaints is appropriate and not wasteful of public money. Therefore, the Board may take the view that a complaint does not need to be investigated, either by themselves or at a local level.

3.13 In such cases, Ethical Standards Officers have the option of issuing Monitoring Officers with directions to take action to solve local problems. This might, for example, involve training for the whole Council; guidance on proper procedures; or mediation. The aim, whatever the specific circumstances, is to help the Council improve its own effectiveness and conduct, at a far lower cost in time and money than an investigation.

3.14 Over the last two years, the Standards Board has commissioned a number of research projects. During 2006-07, four major research studies were completed.

3.15 A useful analogy drawn from one of the studies suggests that there are three broad types of Standards Committees. A lapdog committee is ineffective, often due to lack of resources or political interference. A watchdog committee fulfils the statutory role, keeping an eye on Member conduct and overseeing operation of the Code. A guide dog committee goes further, seeing itself not just as a regulatory body, but as a champion of ethical conduct, responsible for helping and supporting Members in raising standards.

3.16 An overall positive picture has emerged from the research studies completed:

- 80% of respondents (including Members and Officers) believe that high standards of behaviour for Members is one of the most important issues facing local government;

- 93% of respondents support the requirement for Members to sign a Code of Conduct;
- 44% of respondents believe that standards of ethical conduct in local authorities have improved over the last few years;
- In a local authority where a local investigation has taken place, 69% of Monitoring Officers report positive impacts of local investigations;
- Standards Committee Members generally believe that they have a good relationship with their Monitoring Officer with 91% indicating a good working relationship.

3.17 *A New Focus on Parish Councils:* If devolution of the system for upholding standards is to be completely successful, it is essential to develop good governance at all levels. The Standards Board have submitted a joint bid with the National Association of Local Councils, the Society for Local Council Clerks and the Improvement and Development Agency for funding for two projects aimed at supporting the work of Parish and Town Councils and encouraging high standards.

3.18 The first is a peer-mentoring programme, which will match trained Councillor mentors with Parish and Town Councils to share their knowledge and understanding of good practice and the development of a model agreement to encourage closer relationships between local Councils and the Standards Committee.

3.19 In conclusion, the Standards Board feels like they have struck the right balance between welcoming the positive changes that have continued to take place over the last 12 months, and recognising the scale of the challenge that local authorities still face.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 No specific financial implications have been identified.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 The Council's Management Team has considered this report.

6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 All material considerations have been taken into account in the contents of this report. In particular, risks may arise unless Members of Council are fully apprised on standards matters.

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None apply.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES

8.1 None apply.

Contact Officer: Dennis A. Hall
Telephone Number: 01388 816166, Ext. 4268
E-mail address: dahall@sedgefield.gov.uk

Wards: N/A

Key Decision Validation: N/A

Background Papers

Standards Board Annual Review – “To Higher Standards”

Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Council’s Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Council’s S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council’s Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Item 6

ITEM NO.

REPORT TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

1ST NOVEMBER 2007

REPORT OF SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL AND MONITORING OFFICER

STANDARDS TRAINING EVENT: WEDNESDAY 27th JUNE 2007: EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report analyses the evaluation questionnaire responses from the training event on standards issues, presented by Peter Keith Lucas of Bevan, Brittan Solicitors that was held on Wednesday 27th June 2007 at Ferryhill Leisure Centre.
- 1.2 The event provided the opportunity to take part in a mock-up of "first sieve" which involved small groups acting as a Standards Committee; each group evaluated complaints and decided whether to conduct an investigation. The groups then discussed why each complaint was or was not worth investigating, and cost implications of the different decisions were demonstrated. The event also incorporated a discussion on the revised Code of Conduct.

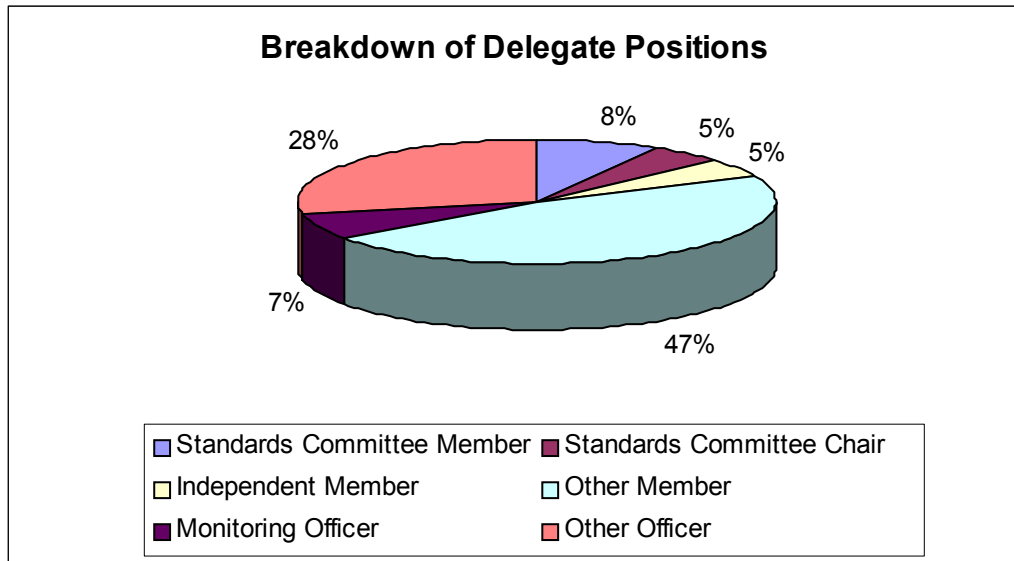
2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Standards Committee be appraised of the report.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The event attracted a large amount of interest at a regional level and the number of representatives totalled 67, 60 of whom attended.
- 3.2 Out of the 60 delegates, 42 completed the evaluation questionnaire and hence, the analysis is based only on the completed 42 questionnaires. The questionnaire focused on three areas, which consisted of general information, a course satisfaction survey and comments.
- 3.3 **Delegate Positions:** Evidently, the majority of delegates who attended the event were Members, and a proportion of these were Standard Committee Members. The remaining delegates consisted of Monitoring Officers, Deputy Monitoring Officers and other Officers.

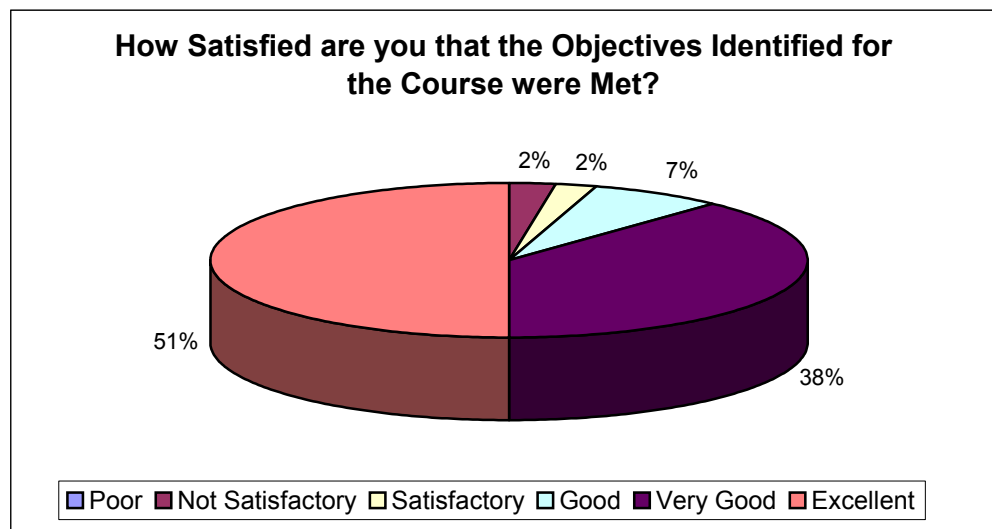
3.4



3.5 **Course Satisfaction Survey:** All of the responses to the questions from the satisfaction survey have been correlated and conclusions have been drawn. Outlined below are the responses to each of the individual questions.

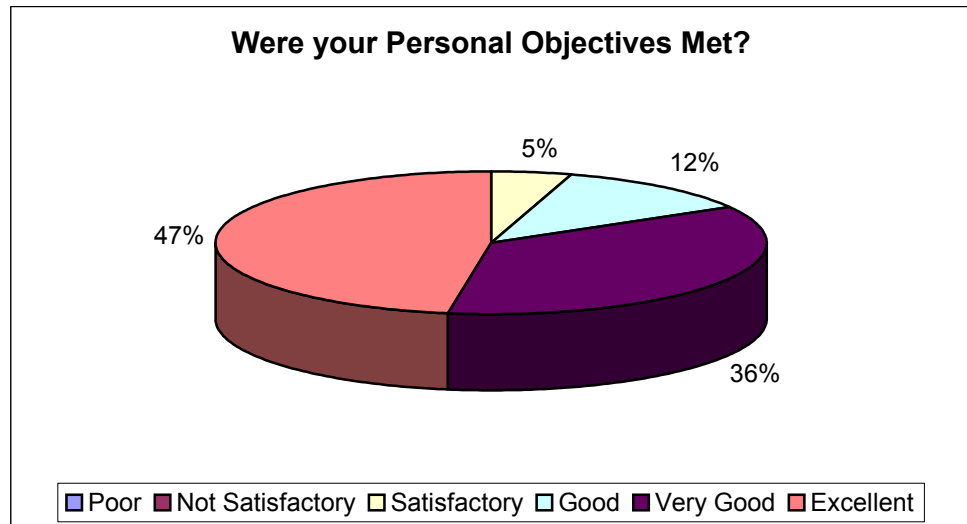
3.6 *How satisfied are you that the objectives identified for the course were met?* The responses to this question were extremely positive, 51% of the delegates were highly satisfied and the majority of the delegates were of the opinion that the objectives identified for the course were met to a satisfactory or higher standard.

3.7



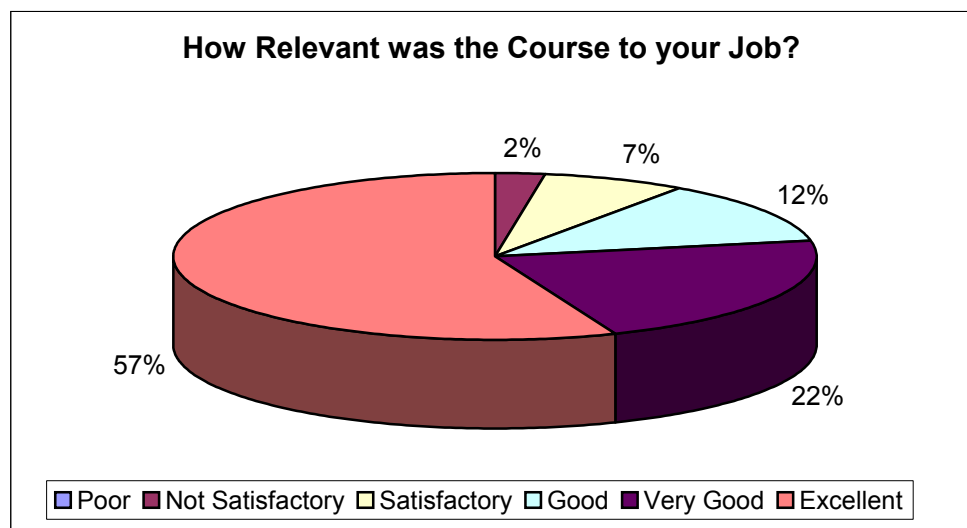
3.8 *Were your personal objectives met?* All of the delegates thought that their personal objectives had been met, over three quarters to a very high standard.

3.9



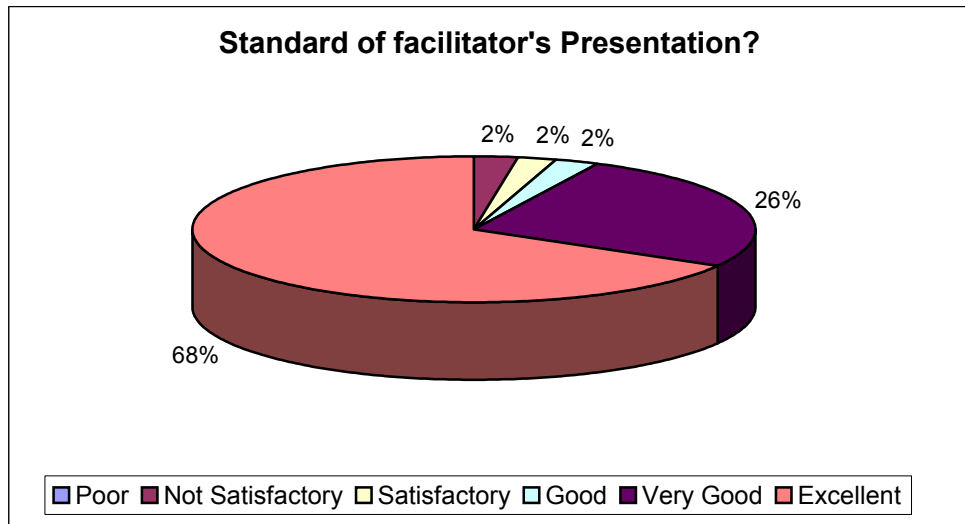
3.10 *How relevant was the course to your job?* As expected the course was very relevant to the majority of the delegates because the course was aimed specifically at Members, Monitoring Officers and relevant Officers.

3.11



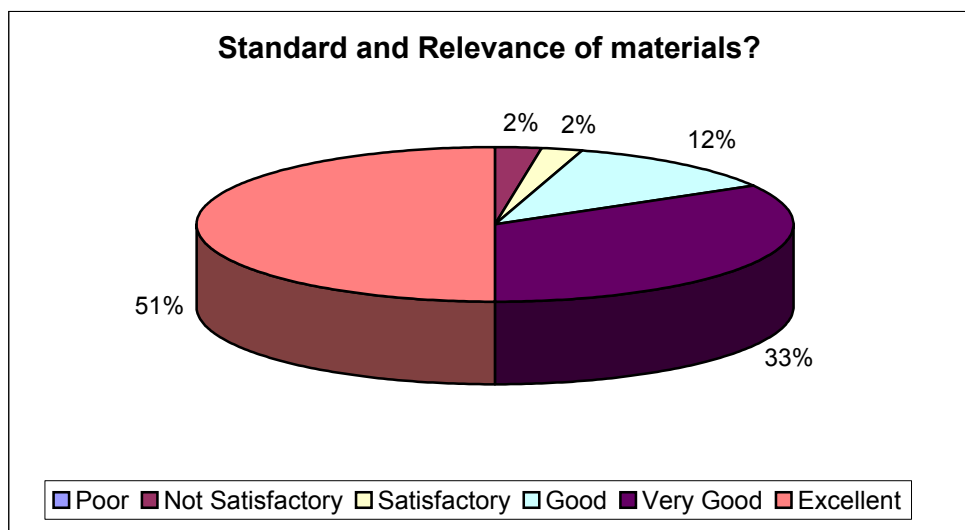
3.12 *Standard of facilitator's presentation?* The standard of the facilitator's presentation was extremely high, 68% of the delegates thought that Peter Keith – Lucas' presentation was excellent.

3.13



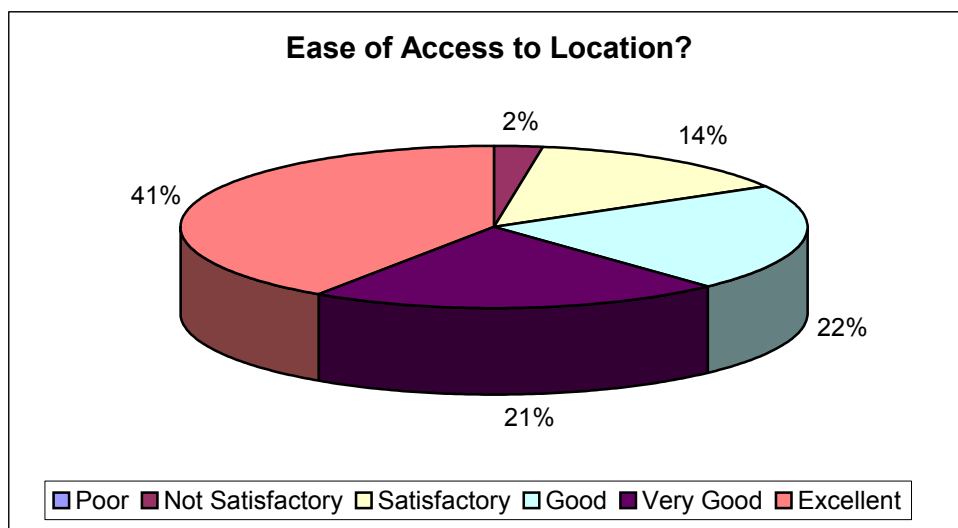
3.14 *Standard and relevance of materials?* Half of the delegates agreed that the standard and relevance of the material was outstanding. As shown below the remaining delegates were more than satisfied with the material.

3.15

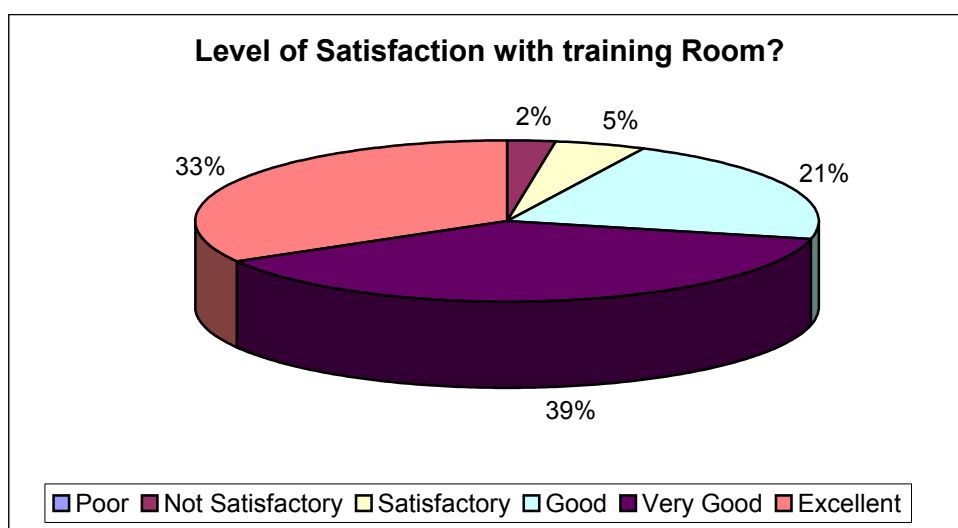


3.16 *Ease of access to location?* A minority of the delegates, 2% were not satisfied with the location of the Leisure Centre. The reason for this could possibly be because it is not in a prominent position as it is located within a housing estate. However, the majority were satisfied, and 51% thought that the location was excellent.

3.17

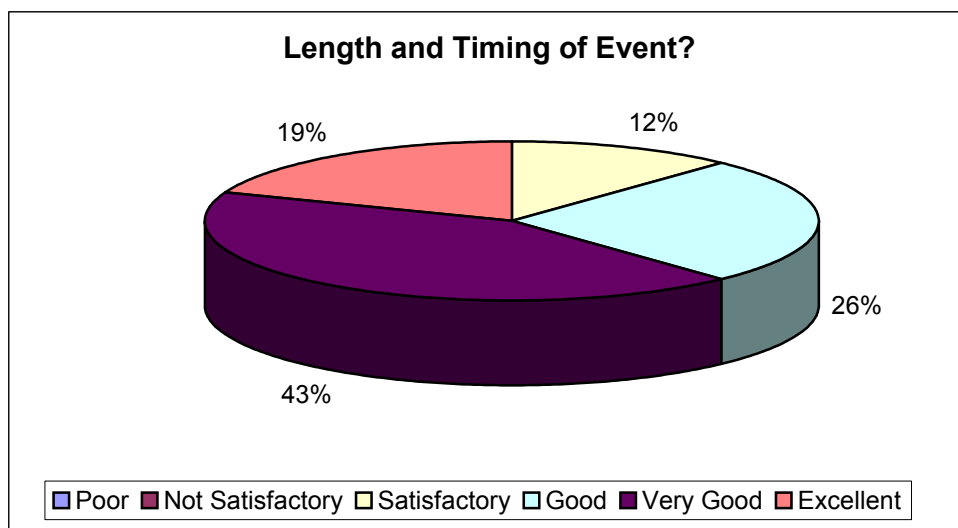


3.18 *Level of satisfaction with training room?* The majority of delegates rated the training room as good, very good or excellent. 2% of delegates were not satisfied with the training room and 5% were only satisfied; from the comments made on the questionnaire the apparent reason for this was because the room was very warm.



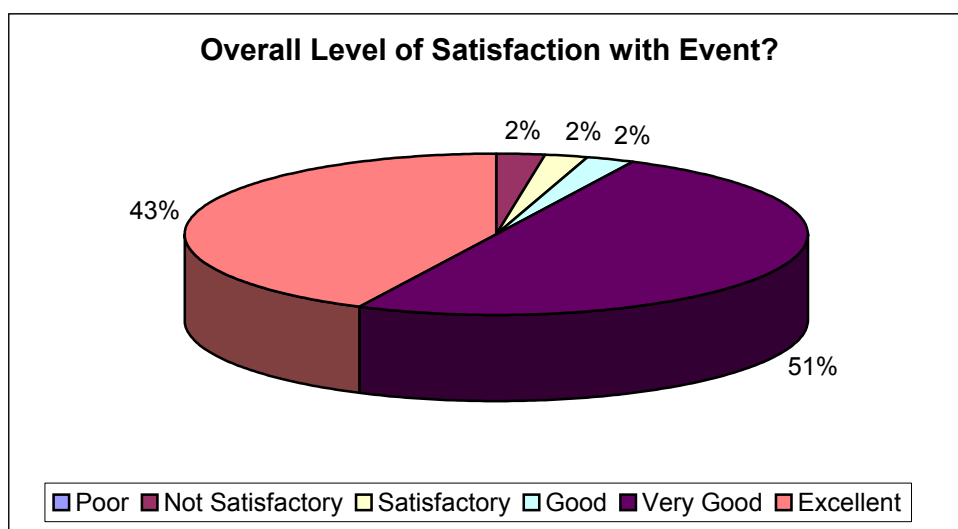
3.19 *Length and timing of event?* The training course was a one-day event, which ran from 10.00a.m until 4.00p.m, two coffee breaks were arranged and a buffet lunch. The majority of the questionnaires suggested that the event was of the right time and length and the day was handled well regarding time management. However, several delegates thought that the afternoon session could have been condensed.

3.20



3.21 *Overall level of satisfaction with event?* As the figures show below, the event was a huge success with over 90% expressing a high level of overall satisfaction.

3.22



3.23 **Comments:** The majority of the questionnaires contained positive feedback and comments. Some of the comments included:

- course trainer was a very engaging and an extremely knowledgeable individual, who controlled the pace of the event very well;
- content and training were very well thought out and facilitated;
- an excellent course delivered in an interesting and entertaining manner;
- everything was extremely well presented and the facilities provided were of a high standard;
- excellent initiative by Sedgefield Borough Council;
- very interesting and informative, a good insight into the new Code of Conduct;

- an excellent event, as a new Member it will help me in my new role.

3.24 Several suggestions were made to further improve the event, including:

- more time to discuss the case studies;
- more time for interactive/role play/feedback opportunities;
- use hand held microphone for audience;
- would be more comfortable/practical to be seated at tables for paperwork;
- afternoon session should be shortened.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 No specific financial implications have been identified.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 The Council's Management Team has considered this report.

6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 All material considerations have been taken into account in the contents of this report. In particular, risks may arise unless Members of Council are fully appraised on standards matters.

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None apply.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES

8.1 None apply.

Contact Officer: Dennis A. Hall
Telephone Number: 01388 816166, Ext. 4268
E-mail address: dahall@sedgefield.gov.uk

Wards: N/A

Key Decision Validation: N/A

Background Papers

Evaluation Questionnaires – 27th June 2007

Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Council’s Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Council’s S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council’s Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Item 7

REPORT TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

1ST NOVEMBER 2007

REPORT OF SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL AND MONITORING OFFICER

STANDARDS TRAINING EVENTS: 29TH AUGUST; 5TH SEPTEMBER; 17TH SEPTEMBER AND 26TH SEPTEMBER 2007: EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Report analyses the evaluation questionnaire responses from the training events on standard issues that were held on Wednesday, 29th August 2007 at Ferryhill Town Council, Wednesday, 5th September 2007 at Great Aycliffe Town Council, Monday, 17th September 2007 at Sedgefield Town Council and Wednesday, 26th September 2007 at Spennymoor Town Council. The training sessions were conducted by both the Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer.
- 1.2 The events provided members with an update on standards issues, including the Revised Members Code of Conduct, and provided an opportunity to discuss current issues and receive feedback.

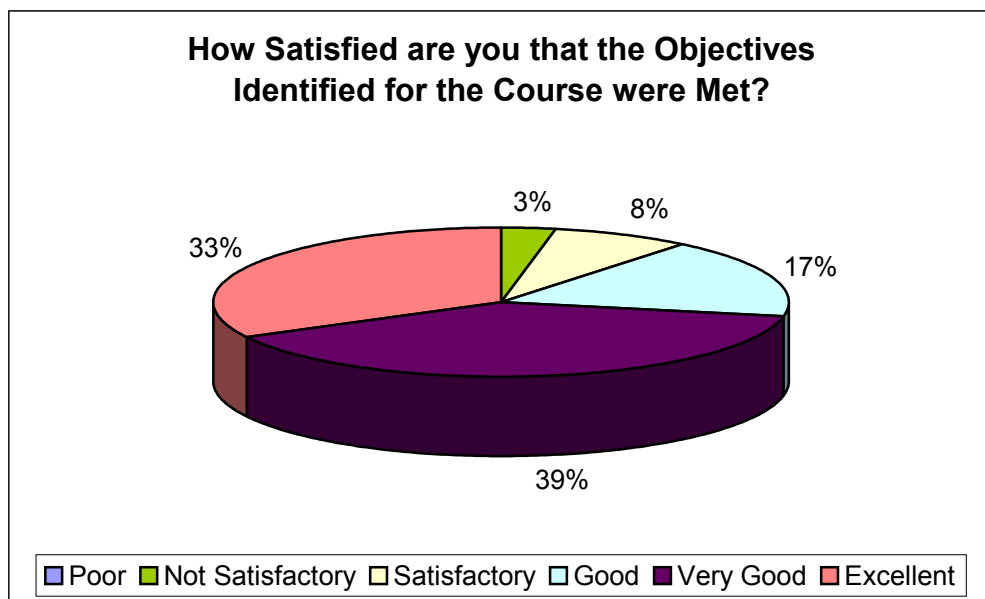
2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Standards Committee be appraised of the report.

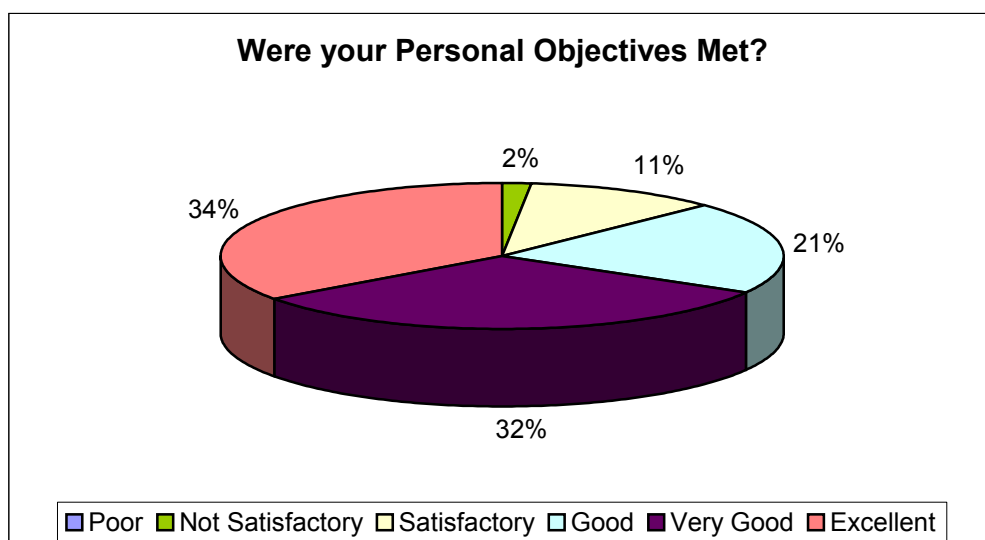
3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The training events were specifically aimed at Members of Borough and Parish Councils and their Clerks.
- 3.2 18 Members attended the first training event held at Ferryhill Town Council, on the 29th August 2007, and all Councillors completed the evaluation questionnaire.
- 3.3 22 Members attended the second training event held at Great Aycliffe Town Council, on the 5th September 2007, and all Councillors completed the evaluation questionnaire.
- 3.4 13 Members attended the third training event held at Sedgefield Town Council, on the 17th September 2007, and, of these, 12 members completed the questionnaire.
- 3.5 12 Members attended the fourth training event held at Spennymoor Town Council, on the 26th September 2007, and all Councillors completed the questionnaire.

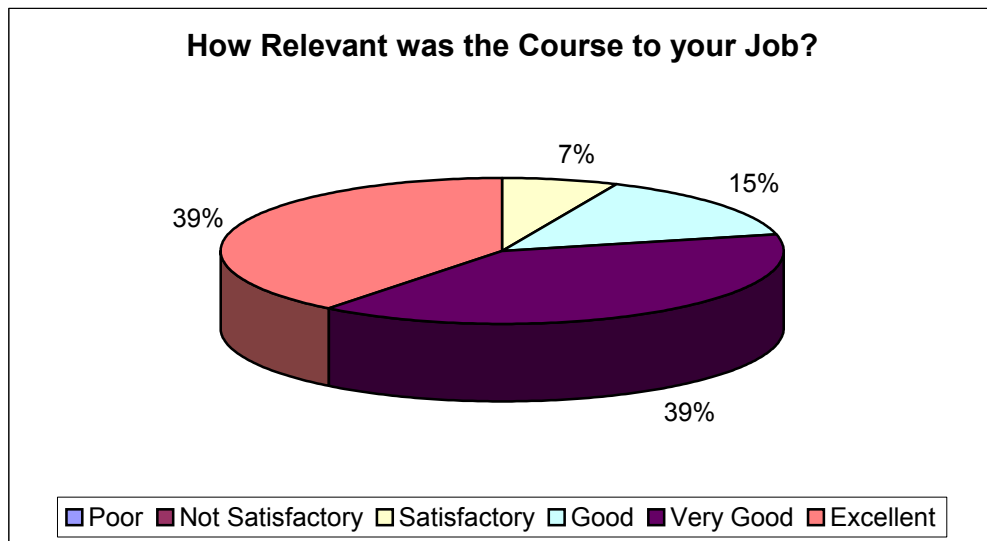
- 3.6 The questionnaire focused on three areas, which consisted of general information, a course satisfaction survey and comments.
- 3.7 **Course Satisfaction Survey:** All of the responses to the questions from the satisfaction survey have been correlated and conclusions have been drawn. The following analysis is based on the collective questionnaire responses from all 4 training events.
- 3.8 *How satisfied are you that the objectives identified for the course were met?* The responses to this question was extremely positive, 89% of the delegates were of the opinion that the objectives identified for the course were met to a good, very good or excellent level.



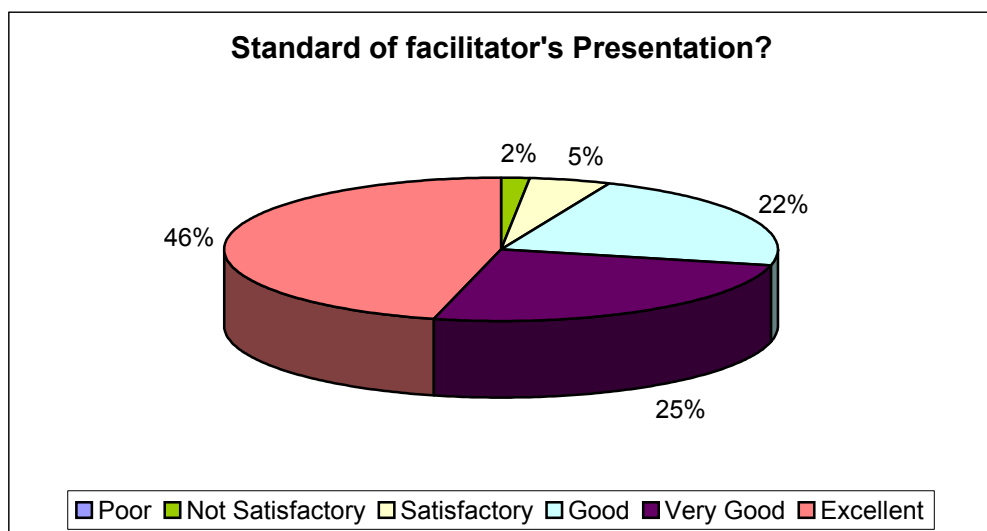
- 3.9 *Were your personal objectives met?* Most of the delegates thought that their personal objectives had been met, 66% to a very high standard.



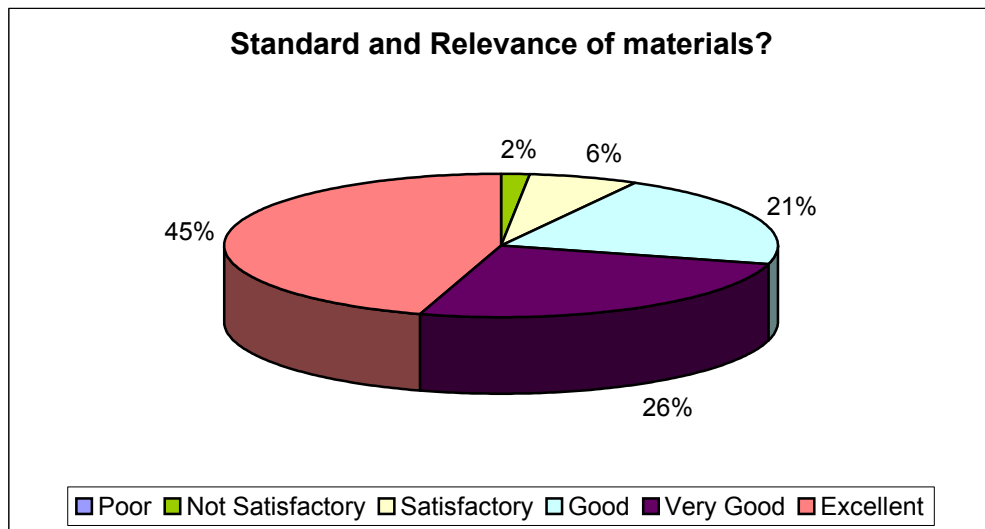
3.10 *How relevant was the course to your Job?* As expected the course was very relevant to the majority of the delegates because the course was aimed specifically at Members.



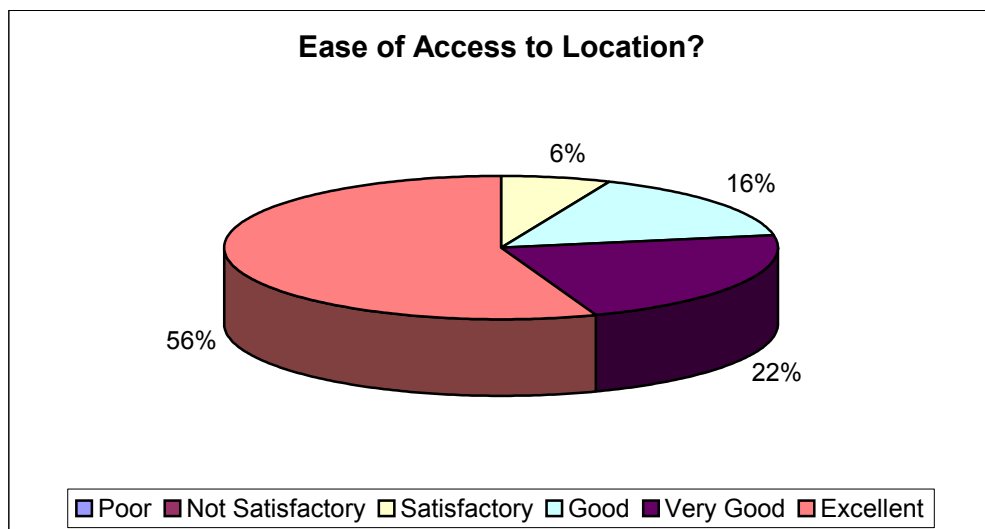
3.11 *Standard of facilitator's presentation?* 46% of the delegates thought that the standard of the facilitator's presentation was excellent.



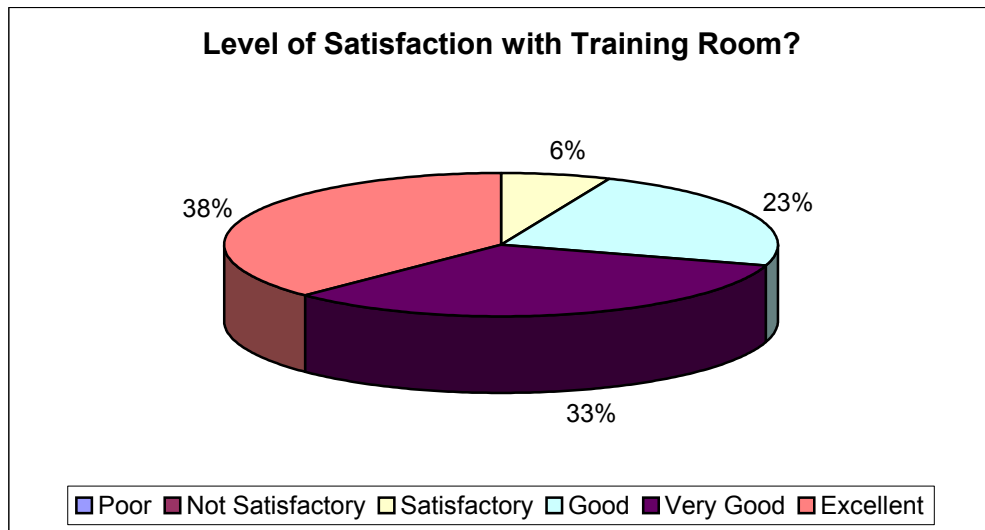
3.12 *Standard and relevance of materials?* 45% of the delegates agreed that the standard and relevance of the material was excellent. Most of the remaining delegates were more than satisfied with the material.



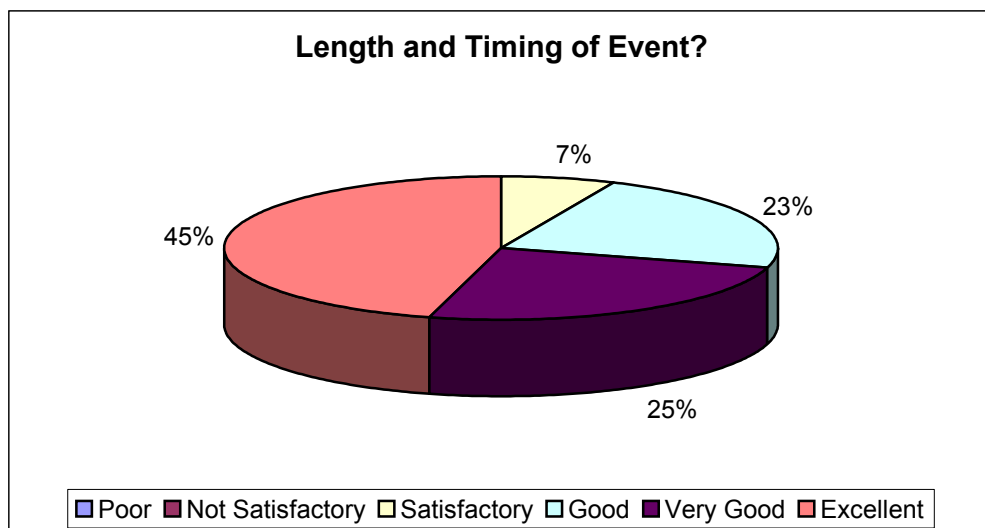
3.13 *Ease of access to location?* Over half the delegates thought that the location was excellent, possibly because the delegates were familiar with the location from previous meetings and training.



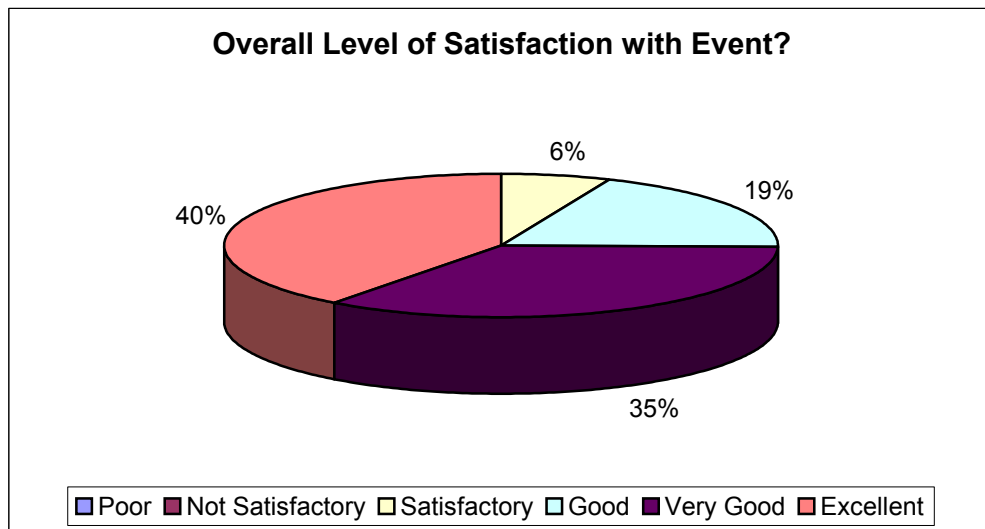
3.14 *Level of satisfaction with training room?* 71% of the delegates agreed that the training room was of a very good or higher standard.



3.15 *Length and timing of event?* 70% of the delegates agreed that the length and time of the event was very good/excellent.



3.16 *Overall level of satisfaction with event?* As the figures show below, the event was a huge success with 75% of delegates expressing a high level of overall satisfaction.



3.17 **Comments:** The majority of the questionnaires contained positive feedback and comments. Some of the comments included:

- Explanations were very plain and easy to comprehend.
- Interesting, informative and well delivered.
- Extremely good DVD – it brought the course alive.
- Very important issues – well presented.

3.18 Several suggestions were made to further improve the event, including:

- Examples of more scenarios.
- Case studies/histories to give a clearer picture to the prejudicial/ personal interests and the declaration of.
- Possible discussion groups with 2/3 examples to let attendees decide if code was breached or not.
- Examples of situations that could occur and how they could be dealt with.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 No specific financial implications have been identified.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 The Council's Management Team has considered this report.

6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 All material considerations have been taken into account in the contents of this report. In particular, risks may arise unless members of the Council are fully appraised on standards matters.

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None apply.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES

8.1 None apply.

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Wards: N/A

Key Decision Validation: N/A

Background Papers

Evaluation Questionnaires: 29th August 2007; 5th September 2007; 17th September 2007 and 26th September 2007.

Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Council's Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Council's S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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