

Item 4

ITEM NO.

REPORT TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

7TH FEBRUARY 2008

REPORT OF SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL AND MONITORING OFFICER

MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: STANDARDS: ATTENDANCE REVIEW 2007

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is a review of Member attendance at Standards Training Events during 2007.
- 1.2 It is a mandatory requirement for all Members to attend at least one qualifying training event per year. Attendance will be reported to the first Standards Committee of each year; henceforward details of Member attendance/non-attendance will be publicly available.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Standards Committee considers the Report.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The qualifying training events that satisfy the mandatory training requirement include the following:
 - Training events conducted or organised by the Council's Monitoring Officer.
 - Conferences, training and events involving wholly or mainly standards and ethical issues organised as part of the Council's member development programmes or by local government organisations and similar bodies, full details of which have previously been notified to the Council's Monitoring Officer. Examples would include the Standards Board for England, CIPFA, the LGA and NEREO.
- 3.2 Several standards training events have been conducted throughout 2007 providing Members with many opportunities to receive training on standards issues. The first training event was organised and held on 27th June, at Ferryhill Leisure Centre, and the facilitator was Peter Keith Lucas of Bevan, Brittan Solicitors. The event provided the opportunity to take part in a local standards mock event to discuss problem areas of the Code, complaints and investigations.

- 3.3 Delegates attended the training event from a wide range of regional authorities, including 12 Borough Members.
- 3.4 Every year the Standards Board for England holds an Annual Assembly of Standards Committees in Birmingham. The 2007 Assembly focused in depth on putting local regulation and the revised Code of Conduct into action. There were limited places available for this event, hence, only two Members attended from this authority, Councillor Andrew Gray and Councillor Andrew Smith.
- 3.5 Five training events were held in the Autumn of 2007, presented by the Council's Monitoring Officer/Deputy Monitoring Officer. These were held at various locations, including Ferryhill Town Council, Great Aycliffe Town Council, Sedgfield Town Council, Spennymoor Town Council and Sedgfield Borough Council. Members had the option of which training session they preferred to attend.
- 3.6 37 Members attended the training events in 2007, with some members attending more than one event.
- 3.7 13 Councillors failed to attend any of the standards training events organised by the Monitoring Officer, representing 26% of the Council's members.
- 3.8 ***Parish and Town Councils:*** It was proposed that Parish and Town Clerks adopt similar training arrangements for their Members and maintain records of attendances at qualifying training events. It is suggested that attendance/non-attendance be reported annually at their Council Meetings.

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.

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Wards: N/A

Key Decision Validation: N/A

Background Papers

Attendance lists from organised training events in 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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