

## **Standards Committee**

**7 November 2012**



## **Parish and Town Council Briefing Session Feedback Report**

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### **Report of Colette Longbottom, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer**

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#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform Members of the feedback received from a recent briefing session which was delivered to delegates from the County's Parish and Town Councils, held on 11 October 2012.

#### **Background**

2. The Localism Act came into force at the end of December 2011, and with it, brought many changes to the Standards regime, the requirement on Council's to have a Code of Conduct and the requirements placed on all Elected Members in relation to the registering of interests.
3. In order to ensure that all Parish and Town Council's understood the changes which have been made by the new legislation, and in an attempt to respond to any queries from local Elected Members and their staff, the Monitoring Officer took the decision to deliver a briefing session to all of the County's local Councils.
4. Delegates were invited from all of the County's local authorities and 86 people (representing 34 Parish and Town Councils) attended, with a broad mix of local Councillors, Chairs and Clerks. In conjunction with the County Monitoring Officer, the event was hosted by the County Deputy Monitoring Officer, Durham County Council's Governance Solicitor and the local representative from the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC).
5. Several presentations were delivered during the event, covering topics such as the changes to Standards and the NALC Template Code of Conduct. The topics raised generated good debate and discussion with delegates and many of those in attendance took the opportunity to seek clarification and ask questions on relevant matters.

## **Feedback**

6. All delegates were provided with an evaluation form which they were requested to complete in order for comments to be taken on board and improvements made to similar future events. 42 evaluation forms have been completed and returned, all of which provide positive feedback.
7. The forms asked delegates to score the event on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent. 12 people gave the event a rating of 3, 17 gave the event a rating of 4 and 11 people rated the score with a 5. 2 delegates failed to score the event.
8. Reasons for the scores provided generally commented on how informative and interesting the information was and how well delivered and relevant the presentations had been. All comments, compliments and suggestions will be taken into consideration when similar events are being planned.

## **Recommendation**

9. Standards Committee is invited to note the content of this report.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** – none specific in this report

**Staffing** – none specific in this report

**Risk** – none specific in this report

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty** – none specific in this report

**Accommodation** - none specific in this report

**Crime and Disorder** - none specific in this report

**Human Rights** - none specific in this report

**Consultation** – none specific in this report

**Procurement** - none specific in this report

**Legal Implications** – none specific in this report