
REPORT TO:	STANDARDS COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 8
DATE OF MEETING:	19 December 2001	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	JONATHAN EATOUGH X5831	DOC:
SUBJECT:	THE NEW CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: Article 8.02

1 Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that

- 1.1.1 The new Model Code of Conduct for Members of the District Council attached at Annexe 'A' be circulated to all members and to other relevant bodies for their comments; and
- 1.1.2 The new Model Code of Conduct for Members of Parish Councils attached at Annexe 'B' be circulated to the local Parish Councils and to other relevant bodies for their comments; and
- 1.1.3 The workplan attached at Annexe 1 be adopted and officers plan their work in accordance with it and report back on progress to the next meeting of the Standards Committee.

2 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To note the receipt of the new Model Codes of Conduct for Members of the District Council and Parish Councils and to consider the process leading to their adoption.

3 Detail

- 3.1 Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 establishes an ethical framework for the operation of local government. In accordance with section 50 of the Act the Government has now published model codes of conduct for adoption by both the District Council and Parish Councils. Copies of those documents have already been circulated to members of this committee.

- 3.2 A model code must be adopted within 6 months, i.e. before 5 May 2002. If the authority (meaning the District Council or the Parish Councils in this case) fail to adopt a code before this date then they will be deemed to have automatically adopted the model code.
- 3.3 It is a required function of this committee that it advises the authority and parish councils upon the adoption or revision of the relevant code of conduct. The contents of the model code are compulsory and cannot be altered. Members may decide to recommend the inclusion of further provisions but any provisions so included must be consistent with the compulsory elements of the code and the strong advice from both central government and the Standards Board is that no such further provisions should be included in the code. That is not to say however that you cannot develop guidance on how to comply with the code.
- 3.4 Once a code has been adopted all members (both at District and Parish Council level) must provide a written undertaking that they will observe the local code. If they fail to provide this undertaking within the time limit (2 months from adoption) they cease to be a member of the Council.
- 3.5 A draft workplan is attached at Annexe 1 that sets out the proposed timetable for consideration and approval by members.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 There is a significant amount of work to be undertaken in order to ensure that a fully informed decision about the Code of Conduct is taken by members and that members (of both District and Parish Councils) and officers and clerks are trained on the new provisions of the code.