

SC/006/10

Committee Standards Committee

Date 29 April 2010

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Annual Return 2010



Annual Return form - 2010

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PART 1: COMMUNICATION

Annual Report

Does the standards committee produce an annual report?

Yes

What does the report contain?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A personal statement by the standards committee chairman | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information about the members of the standards committee |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The role of the standards committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The standards committee terms of reference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information about the Code of Conduct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Statistical information about complaints that have been received |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information about the length of time taken dealing with complaints | <input type="checkbox"/> A summary of complaints which have led to investigation, sanction or other action |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Details about training/events provided | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The forward work plan of the standards committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

How is the standards committee annual report circulated?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to all senior officers | <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to all members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Available on the authority intranet | <input type="checkbox"/> Available as a specific item on the authority website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Available in the standards committee papers published on the authority website | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included as a full authority meeting agenda item |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publicised in local press | <input type="checkbox"/> Distributed to households |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Available at authority offices | <input type="checkbox"/> Not circulated outside of the standards committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Publicising Complaints

How can the public access information about how to make a complaint against a member?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Through a 'compliments and complaints' type section of the council website | <input type="checkbox"/> Through the standards committee section of the website |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complaints leaflets available from the authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Included as part of a council newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information is not available to the public | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

How can the public access information about the outcome of initial assessment decisions?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Written summary available for public inspection | <input type="checkbox"/> All initial assessment decisions are publicised in the local press |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publicised in the local press only if the subject member agrees | <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment decisions published on the authority website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Articles published in the authority newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

How can the public access information about the outcome of investigations?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hearings are open to the public | <input type="checkbox"/> All investigation outcomes are publicised in the local press |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publicised in the local press only if the subject member agrees | <input type="checkbox"/> Published on the authority website |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Decision notices are available for public inspection | <input type="checkbox"/> Articles in the authority newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Do you have a mechanism in place for measuring the satisfaction of all those involved in allegations of misconduct? For example the member, complainant and witnesses.

No

Communicating the role and work of the standards committee and standards generally

What does the authority do to promote the work of the standards committee and standards generally to the rest of the authority (i.e. internally)?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated standards committee pages on intranet | <input type="checkbox"/> Standards committee has its own newsletter / bulletin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Standards committee issues briefing notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Articles in employee newsletter / bulletin / newspaper |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee independent members observe other authority meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Standards committee independent members contribute to other authority meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

How can the public access information about your standards committee?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated standards committee section on the authority website | <input type="checkbox"/> Within 'council and democracy' type section of website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical standards issues have been included in the local press / media | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee minutes, agendas, and reports are available to the public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflets and/or posters are placed in public buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> Places articles in the authority newsletter / bulletin / other publication |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee meetings are observed by members of the public | <input type="checkbox"/> Information is not available to the public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

What else does the authority do to promote the work of the standards committee and standards generally to the public and other partners?

Forward plan of activity will consider this

PART 2: INFLUENCE

How does the standards committee communicate ethical issues to the senior figures within your authority (for example the Chief Executive and Leader of the Authority, Party Leaders)?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formal meetings between standards committee members and senior figures specifically set up to discuss standards | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal discussion on particular standards issues |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Senior figure attendance at standards committee meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Officer is a member of or attends Corporate Management Team (or equivalent) meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive or senior member has portfolio responsibility for standards | <input type="checkbox"/> Chair (or other standards committee member) addresses full authority meeting(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

How do the senior figures in your authority demonstrate strong ethical values?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Through a strongly promoted whistle-blowing policy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By ensuring there are references to ethics in the authority vision / objectives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrating appropriate behaviours | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Senior figure(s) makes personal commitment to standards in statements to public/employees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Through any other method | |

Does your authority have a protocol for partnership working that outlines the standards of behaviour expected of all those working in partnership?

No

What mechanisms does the authority use for dealing with member/officer and/or member/member disputes?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informal discussion/mediation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Officer mediation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chair of standards committee mediation | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior figure mediation (e.g. Chief Executive) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advice from Human Resources department | <input type="checkbox"/> Solicitor / legal adviser consulted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Informal hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> No mechanisms other than normal complaints process |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

PART 3: TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010, has the authority assessed the training and development needs of authority members in relation to their responsibilities on standards of conduct?

Yes

If yes, what needs were identified?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduction to the Code of Conduct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elements of the Code of Conduct |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The role and responsibilities of the standards committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical governance/behaviour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What training/support was provided during the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduction to the Code of Conduct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elements of the Code of Conduct |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Role and responsibilities of the standards committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical governance/behaviour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Who received training/support?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Independent members |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other standards committee members | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All authority members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific authority members with particular needs (e.g. new members, planning committee members) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What methods were employed to give training/support?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal training (presentations/seminars/workshops) | <input type="checkbox"/> External trainer/speaker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> One on one training | <input type="checkbox"/> Joint/regional training event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Online learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance notes/briefing materials |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards for England materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical governance toolkit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

In which areas of the Code of Conduct has training/support been provided?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Respect | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal/Prejudicial Interests |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use of resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bullying |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disrepute | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Predisposition, Pre-determination and bias |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

What other training/support has been provided on areas of an authority member's role or activities they may engage in?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chairing skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Lobbying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Predetermination, Predisposition and bias | <input type="checkbox"/> Blogging and/or the use of social media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electioneering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Freedom of Information (FOI) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

In general, how well attended was the training provided?

25-50%

Please give a brief overview of how standards issues are covered in your induction process for new members of the authority?

A general introduction, history of standards and introduction to the Code of Conduct. Use of SFE DVD.

In which areas of the role and responsibilities of the standards committee has training/support been provided for standards committee members? Please tick all that apply.

☒

Initial assessments

☐

Other action/mediation

☐

Reviews

☐

Investigations

☐

Hearings

☐

Sanctions

☐

Other

PART 4: INVESTIGATIONS

Have any investigations been completed during the period 1 April 2009 - 31 March 2010? No

End of form