

ITEM NO.4

REPORT TO THE STANDARDS MEETING OF 22 MARCH 2011

Status: *Information*

Title: *Training for Parish Councils*

Originator: *Verina Wenham, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer*

Where from: *Management Board*

Where to next:

1 Purpose Report

- 1.1 To update members of the proposals for training of parish councillors following the elections on 5 May 2011.

2 Recommendations:

- 2.1 **That members consider and approve the proposed training programme as detailed in the body of this report.**

3 Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 The Standards Committee is responsible for ensuring that both district councillors and parish councillors received training on the Code of Conduct.

4 Impact on Communities

- 4.1 The Standards Committee has a central role in supporting and improving ethical conduct of the Council. By ensuring that all members receive appropriate training on conduct in public life the committee is fulfilling its responsibilities under its terms of reference and helping to maintain the public's confidence in

5 Key Facts

- 5.1 The Standards Committee is responsible for procuring training for all members who are bound by the Code of Conduct. This includes both district and parish councillors. An induction programme is being developed for district councillors following the election in May 2011, part of which will include ethical governance and specifically the Code of Conduct. The induction training will take place during May 2011.

- 5.2 It is proposed that two training sessions should be provided for the parishes, and that the sessions should be held within the district as opposed from the Council Offices in market Harborough. This is in response to the responses

from the Parish council questionnaire circulated last year that suggested the Standards committee could be more active within the district. The Coplow Centre at Billesdon has been identified as a suitable venue and the details are attached as Appendix A. There are two options available, the main hall and the meeting room. The meeting room will only accommodate 25, which may be too small. Discussions have also taken place with Lutterworth Sports Centre who have a room available, but again the maximum numbers permitted would be 25. However, Lutterworth Town Council has the Pavilion which could be made available. It is proposed that the training will take place during the first two weeks of June 2011. The Monitoring Officer will update the committee with respect to available dates..

5.3 The training programme will address the existing Code of Conduct will in part be based upon the Code of Conduct training material produced for member training in August and September 2009. A copy of this is produced as Appendix B. However, as members are aware, there are major changes proposed for ethical governance arrangements under the Localism Bill. Therefore, the training will be broadened out to cover ethical standards and the general principles of standards in public life. The Localism Bill does propose that the Code of Conduct is abolished; however, the Council will still be responsible for maintaining high ethical standards.

5.4 It is proposed that the training will be provided by the Monitoring Officer in conjunction with the Chairman. A “mop up” training session will also be offered later in the year, which will be held at the council offices.

6 Legal Issues

6.1 All members agree to abide by the code of Conduct when they sign their declaration of acceptance of office. The Standards committee is responsible for ensuring that adequate training is provided to assist members in adhering to their obligations.

7 Resource Issues

7.1 There will be a cost for hiring accommodation which will be met from existing budgets. The training material will be produced and delivered by the Monitoring Officer so there is no cost of external providers.

8 Equality Implications

8.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

9 Impact on the Organisation

9.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

10 Community Safety Implications

10.1 none as far as this report is concerned.

11. Carbon Management Implications

11.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

12. Risk Management Implications

12.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

13. Consultation

13.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

14. Options Considered

14.1 The standards committee is required to provide training in respect to the Conduct as set out in its terms of reference in the Constitution.

15. Background Papers

15.1 None

Previous report(s): *text*

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure: *Y/N*

Ward Members Notified: *Y/N*

Appendices: *list any appendices here including title and filename in brackets (e.g. Performance Data 2010 (perfdata.doc)).*

A. Terms of Hire – Coplow Centre

B. Code of Conduct Training Materials

C.

D.