

FUTURE TRAINING FOR STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Officer contact: Julie Openshaw Tel: 01494 421252
Email: julie.openshaw@wycombe.gov.uk

Wards affected: All

PROPOSED DECISION

To express a view upon the arrangements that should be made for training after the 2015 elections.

Reason for Decision

To maintain monitoring of training for Committee members, particularly in light of the forthcoming 2015 elections and the possible changes in membership which may occur.

Corporate Implications

1. Within its terms of reference, the Standards Committee has a general remit to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the Members and co-opted Members of Wycombe District Council, which includes assisting Members and co-opted Members of the District Council to observe the Council's Code of Conduct, and advising, training or arranging the training of Members and Co-opted Members of the District Council on matters relating to the authority's Code of Conduct.

Executive Summary

2. This report supports the Standards Committee's role in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct.

Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications

3. Robust training arrangements for standards matters helps support good governance.

Background and Issues

4. During 2014, members of the Standards Committee have received two training sessions. On 11 March, David Ruddock, the former District Solicitor, gave a presentation on the Localism Act 2011 and how the new standards arrangements have operated at Wycombe District Council since their introduction in July 2012.

5. Subsequently, on 28 October, a wide ranging training session on standards issues including the Code of Conduct, disclosable pecuniary interests, probity in planning, and the general constraints on Councillor conduct was presented by Peter Keith-Lucas, a highly experienced and respected external presenter.
6. Both of these sessions were open to all members of the Council, as well as the Clerk and Chairman, or up to two other nominees, of each Parish. The former was attended by 22 members, including all but one member of the Standards Committee, and the latter was attended by 20 Members, 7 parish council representatives, and an independent person; a further member requested and received a separate briefing from the Monitoring Officer.

Options

7. There are no options.

Conclusions

8. Consideration at this stage of future training arrangements will help shape the Council's plans for appropriate further training after the 2015 elections and to make timely arrangements.

Next Steps

9. Make appropriate arrangements taking into account the Committee's views.

Background Papers

None.