

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2009**

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2009 - 10**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER**

**1. PURPOSE**

This report seeks to establish a work plan for the Standards Committee for the municipal year 2009 – 10.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 That the Committee approve the Standards Committee work plan attached at Appendix 1 subject to any amendments/comments that the Committee may wish to make.**

**3. SUMMARY**

A draft work plan has been prepared for the Standards Committee for the next municipal year. The intention of the work plan is to identify the main areas of work to be undertaken by the Committee over the next twelve months and to make plans to ensure that the work is undertaken within appropriate timescales.

**4. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

None.

**5. INFORMATION**

**5.1 Background**

There have been a number of changes to the ethical framework over the last twelve months, in particular with regard to the move to local filtration of the Code of Conduct complaints. Further changes are expected with regard to the Code of Conduct this year. The recent Standards Board bulletin also indicates that there will be further Standards Committee regulations which will include changes to process in the ethical framework such as the law relating to dispensations.

Accordingly, there is a requirement to ensure that the Standards Committee is kept up to date with these changes, makes any amendments to its own practices and procedures, and ensures that

Telford & Wrekin Councillors (and Parish and Town Councillors within the Borough) are also made aware of the latest developments. In order to provide some structure to the work undertaken by the Standards Committee it is proposed that a work plan is established to ensure that the Committee can meet all of its obligations and objectives during the coming year.

The Committee will note that the responsibility for undertaking these actions varies but includes this Committee, the Chairman of the Committee, the Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer.

The Committee is asked to provide any comments or suggestions with regard to the attached draft work plan and to approve the contents.

## **5.2 Equality and Diversity**

Consideration of equality and diversity issues will be given for each of the items referred to in Appendix 1 of the report. Appropriate action, such as equality impact needs assessments, will be undertaken as and when required.

## **5.3 Environmental Impact**

No implications.

## **5.4 Legal Comment**

Establishing a work plan for the Standards Committee is good practice but is not a legal requirement. The decision to approve the work plan will not fetter the discretion of the Committee during the forthcoming year. The Committee can vary the work plan at subsequent meetings if they decide that it is necessary to do so.

## **5.5 Links with Corporate Priorities**

Establishing a work plan detailing the areas that need to be addressed during the forthcoming year will assist in meeting Corporate Priority 7 of being an efficient, effective and customer-focused Council.

## **5.6 Opportunities and Risks**

The risks associated with setting out a work programme for the next twelve months have been assessed and will be managed accordingly.

## **5.7 Financial Implications**

It is anticipated that the costs of the activities set out in the work programme will be met from within existing resources. Any overspends that arise will be highlighted through regular financial monitoring during 2009/10.

6. **WARD IMPLICATIONS**

District wide implications.

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The Standards Board for England's Bulletin No. 42 – February 2009.

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