



***ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS  
COMMITTEE OF TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL  
2009-10***

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## **INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

In my first year as Chairman of the Standards Committee I want to start by paying tribute to Andy Simpson, the outgoing Chairman, who has now vacated his position both as Chairman and an Independent Member of the Standards Committee. Andy was an integral part of the Committee since its inception and he will be missed. I take the opportunity to thank him for the many years of service that he provided.

I also wanted to mention the sad loss of Councillors Ute Sambrook and Pauline Picken. Ute was a previous chair of the Standards Committee and served on the Committee for a number of years. She was particularly encouraging when it came to trying to increase the profile of the committee and attendance at Code of Conduct training. Pauline Picken held a position as one of our Parish Council Representatives. Her knowledge and experience was a valuable asset to the committee.

It has been a busy year with a number of assessments, reviews and some local investigations. We have also tried a new format for our code of conduct training by making it more interactive and going out to venues in the Parishes. The training was well received and we hope to do something similar again in the forthcoming year. In addition we have reviewed a number of our processes and procedures.

Our attached work plan sets out the matters that the Committee want to address in the next twelve months. It promises to be an interesting year. Proposals to review the Code of conduct look to have stalled and the future of the Standards regime is in doubt following the change in government. We will watch with interest to see what develops and look forward to meeting the challenges ahead.

Chairman of the Standards Committee.

## SUMMARY OF WORK UNDERTAKEN

The following areas of work have been addressed :-

- We have continued to accept code of conduct complaints for assessment. The details are set out below. We have also had review sub-committee meetings and our first consideration hearings. Details have been provided to Standards for England
- Training has taken place for members of the Borough and Parish Councils, independent members and new members of the Standards Committee.
- Procedures for applying for dispensations and local investigations and hearings have been reviewed
- The Committee have looked at the possibility of a Joint Standards Committee with the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority and will continue to keep that option under review

The Standards Committee have agreed a work plan for the forthcoming year which is attached to this report.

## COMPLAINTS, INVESTIGATIONS AND DETERMINATIONS

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 the following complaints have been processed:-

Assessments – 11

Matters referred for local investigation – 5

Matters referred to Standards For England for investigation – 0

Matters referred for other action – 0

Matters where no further action was required - 6

Reviews – 4 (all upheld the original assessment decision of 'no further action')

## OUTCOMES

Of the five matters referred for investigation; one matter was referred back to the Assessment sub-committee and no further action was taken, one matter is awaiting a full hearing, two matters have concluded following acceptance by the sub-committee of the investigators finding of 'no breach' and one further matter is still in the process of being investigated.

## TRAINING

Code of Conduct training for borough councillors and councillors from the Town & Parish Councils took place on the 22 February and 2 March respectively. There were three training sessions following a new format. Training was in a workshop style which included case studies and involved more feedback from the participants than in previous years. The training also took place in different locations in order to encourage more parish and town councillors to attend.

Attendance was as follows:-

Total attendance – 84

Borough Councillors – 31

Parish Councillors – 45

Others (Officers and Fire Authority members and officers) – 8

Overall the feedback from the training sessions was as follows:-

### AFTERNOON SESSION

RATING	1	2	3	4	5
JOINING INSTRUCTIONS	5	1	7	27	21
CONTENT OF TRAINING	1	0	5	28	27
QUALITY OF PRESENTATION / WORKSHOPS	0	0	8	32	21
SUPPORTING MATERIAL / HANDOUTS	0	1	7	32	21
VENUE	1	5	7	18	30
OVERALL, HOW USEFUL WAS THE TRAINING	1	1	6	27	26

1 = Poor, 2 = Unsatisfactory, 3 = Satisfactory, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent

## THE YEAR AHEAD

On 17<sup>th</sup> June 2010 the Standards Committee approved a work plan for the forthcoming year. Details of the plan are set out at Appendix 2.

## CONTACT DETAILS

Further information about the work of the Standards Committee and details of how to make a complaint regarding the conduct of a Councillor can be obtained from the following council officers:-

- Jonathan Eatough – Head of Governance and Monitoring Officer.  
Telephone 01952 383200  
email: [Jonathan.Eatough@telford.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Eatough@telford.gov.uk)
- Matthew Cumberbatch – Legal Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer.  
Telephone 01952 383255  
email: [Matthew.Cumberbatch@telford.gov.uk](mailto:Matthew.Cumberbatch@telford.gov.uk)
- Ian Ross – Group Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer.  
Telephone 01952 383255  
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- Kirsty Fisher – Group Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Telephone 01952 383255  
Email [Kirsty.Fisher@telford.gov.uk](mailto:Kirsty.Fisher@telford.gov.uk)
- Phil Griffiths – Head of Democratic Services.  
Telephone 01952 383210  
email: [Phil.Griffiths@telford.gov.uk](mailto:Phil.Griffiths@telford.gov.uk)

Or alternatively by writing to the officers referred to above at:

Telford & Wrekin Council,  
Legal Services,  
Civic Offices,  
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Telford  
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