



AGENDA ITEM: 9

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE
4 FEBRUARY 2014**

Report of: Managing Director (People and Places) and Borough Solicitor

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SUBJECT: CODE OF CONDUCT - PARISHES

Wards affected: Borough wide.

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To consider the item, included on the Committee's Work Programme in relation to inviting the Parish Clerks and Parish Chairmen to attend a meeting of the Standards Committee.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That given the processes and annual training already in place in relation to Parish Councillors, the item included on the Work Programme to invite Parish Clerks and Parish Chairmen to attend a meeting of the Committee be no longer included, in the context of the new standards regime.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The new standards regime under the Localism Act 2011 came into effect on 1 July 2012 and the approach has significantly changed.

3.2 The Work Programme for the Committee has traditionally included an item to invite Parish Clerks and Parish Chairman to attend a meeting of the Standards Committee in relation to the Code of Conduct. However, the training event, on the Code of Conduct, held on 20 November 2013 provided an ideal opportunity for Parish Clerks and Parish Councillors to address these issues.

3.3 The Annual training event for Borough Councillors, Parish Councillors and Parish Clerks is attended by Standards Committee Members, the Independent Person, the Reserve Independent Person, Managing Director (People and Places) (Monitoring Officer) and relevant Officers of the Council. As part of that event, Borough / Parish Councillors and Parish Clerks participate in workshops sessions on code of conduct issues to ensure Councillors are aware of the requirements placed upon them under the Code. A training pack is also circulated after this event.

3.4 Parish Councillors are further reminded of their obligations under the Code annually, through information, emailed to the Parish Clerks, following the May local elections. Additionally, information of relevance is also periodically circulated, by the Monitoring Officer, for the attention of Parish Council Members, through the Parish Clerks. The Parish Clerk Liaison Committee also provides an additional forum for Parish Clerks to raise and discuss items collectively with Borough Council Officers.

5.0 CURRENT POSITION

5.1 Members of the Committee may feel that an invitation to Parish Chairmen and Parish Clerks to attend a meeting of the Committee is no longer necessary and that the arrangements that are already in place, particularly the recent training event held in November 2013, is sufficient in this regard.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

6.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder. The report has no significant links with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no significant financial or resource implications arising from this report.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 This item does not require a formal risk assessment and no changes have been made to risk registers as a result of this report.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

The decision does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and/or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

None.