

<i>COMMITTEE</i>	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
<i>DATE</i>	THURSDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2004
<i>TITLE OF REPORT</i>	WORK PROGRAMME & UPDATE ON STANDARDS ISSUES
<i>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</i>	Mark Bowen, assistant director, legal and contract services

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update members on developments relating to the work of the committee.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the chairman report back on the work of the Kent and Medway Independent Members' Forum.
- 2.2 That the independent member Tony Dance and Mark Bowen report back on attendance at the National Assembly of Standards Committees.
- 2.3 That members note the Council's whistle Blowing Policy.

3 DECISION ISSUES

- 3.1 The constitution gives the Standards Committee a key role in ensuring good practice across the authority. However employee issues will usually be delegated to officers or dealt with thorough the Employment Matters Committee.

4 KENT AND MEDWAY INDEPENDENT MEMBERS' FORUM

- 4.1 The chair of the committee is an active participant in the above group and is also the group's secretary. Feedback will be given on group activities, which have included dialogue between the group and an Ethical Standards Officer from the Standards Board for England.

5 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF STANDARDS COMMITTEES

- 5.1 Tony Dance (Independent member) and Mark Bowen (monitoring officer) attended the Annual Assembly of Standards Committees held in Birmingham on 13 and 14 September. The Assembly comprised a mix of keynote presentations by government ministers, the Audit Commission and the Standards Board for England, together with a range of in depth workshops on

key standards issues. It remains the key learning and development event on the code of conduct. More feedback will be given at the meeting.

6 WHISTLE BLOWER POLICY

- 6.1 The previous committee meeting asked for information to be brought forward on the Council's whistle blowing policy. The Council's adopted policy is set out within its Personnel Procedures. The policy is geared towards tackling fraud, malpractice, corruption and unethical conduct regardless of who commits those acts. A copy of the policy is attached.
- 6.2 In addition to providing details of contacts within the Council that issues of concern can be raised with, the policy also flags up that matters can be raised with Public Concern at Work (PCW). This is a voluntary body, which specialises in providing advice to members of the public and public sector employees. In addition to being able to give guidance and support PCW can also refer complaints on. – including to national regulatory bodies.

7 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDANT MEMBER

- 7.1 Interviews for a new Independent member are being held on 16 November to secure a replacement fro Laura Wren and an update will be provided to members at the meeting.

8 LEGAL AND FINANCILA IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The legal implications are contained in the report. There are no direct financial implications.