

<i>COMMITTEE</i>	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
<i>DATE</i>	12 APRIL 2006
<i>TITLE OF REPORT</i>	UPDATE ON STANDARDS ISSUES
<i>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</i>	Angela Drum, acting assistant director, legal, contract and property 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 committee notes the matters raised in sections 4, 5, 8 and 9 of this report.

2.2 The committee agrees to defer a decision on attendance at the Annual Assembly of Standards committees.

2.3 The committee notifies the monitoring officer of any items to be included on the next liaison meeting with Parish clerks.

3 DECISION ISSUES

3.1 The constitution gives the Standards Committee a key role in ensuring good practice across the authority.

4 KENT AND MEDWAY INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF STANDARDS COMMITTEES GROUP

4.1 As has previously been discussed the chair of this committee is the Secretary of the above group. The chair will update the committee on issues arising at recent meetings of the group at the meeting on 12 April 2006.

5 MEETING BETWEEN INDEPENDENT MEMBERS AND THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND

5.1.1 The chair of the committee has recently attended a meeting with independent members facilitated by the Standards Board for England. Attached to this report are documents which cover matters raised at the meeting, specifically these relate to the way forward following the recent ODPM consultation.

5.2 In addition, general indications were given on the timescale for change. It is hoped that a new code of conduct will be prepared during 2007, whereas matters needing legislative change will not occur until 2008.

6 5TH ASSEMBLY OF STANDARDS COMMITTEES

6.1 Previously members have been advised that the next National Assembly of Standards Committees will be held in Birmingham on 16 and 17 October 2006. It is proposed that decisions on attendance are deferred until after the new Monitoring Officer commences employment at Medway.

7 PARISH LIAISON

7.1 The next parish liaison meeting is due to be held in mid May. Members are requested to raise any items they wish raised at the next liaison meeting so the Acting Monitoring Officer can include them on the agenda.

8. MONITORING OFFICER ARRANGEMENTS

8.1 As was advised at the March meeting, the ex-monitoring officer, Mark Bowen left the services of Medway on 31 March to take up a director's post at another authority. In the interim, Angela Drum will be acting as Assistant Director, Legal, Contract and Property Services and Monitoring Officer between 3 April 2006 and 5 May 2006, Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense will take over this role between 8 May 2006 and 4 June 2006. Deborah Upton, presently Head of Legal and Administrative Services at Boston Council has been appointed permanently to the post of Assistant Director, Legal, Contract and Property Services and Monitoring Officer and she will be commencing employment with Medway on Monday 5 June 2006.

9. COMPLAINTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

9.1 The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any complaints against Medway or parish councillors having been made to the Standards Board for England.

10 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The legal implications are set out in the report. In the event of attendance at the 5th Annual Assembly then, costs of members attending would need to be met from the members training budget.

Background Papers

None.

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