

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**7 APRIL 2010**

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

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#### **Summary**

This report sets out a proposed work programme for the Committee in 2010/11. This will be kept under review and presented to each meeting of the Standards Committee. In addition the position relating to complaints considered by the Referrals Sub Committee is summarised for information only.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

1.1 The role of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by all Councillors and co-opted members including church and parent governor representatives serving on the Children and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee has responsibility for setting its own work programme and this should be kept under regular review.

#### **2. Report**

2.1 Appendix 1 to this report sets out the proposed work programme for the Committee up to May 2011.

2.2 The Committee should also note that at the time of this agenda despatch eight complaints alleging member misconduct are currently being investigated locally following consideration by the Referrals Sub Committee. One of these investigations was deferred pending court proceedings which have now concluded. Standards for England guidance on timescales for an investigation acknowledges there are many factors that can affect the time it takes to complete an investigation. There is an expectation that the Standards Committee will monitor the progress of investigations and the SfE guidance recommends that most investigations are carried out, and a report on the investigation completed, within six months of the original complaint being assessed by the Referrals Sub Committee.

2.3 On 10 March 2010 the Referrals Sub Committee considered a complaint and decided no further action should be taken on the allegation. The complainant has a right of review over that decision

and has until 12 April 2010 to request a review. This would have to be carried out by the Review Sub Committee within a maximum of three months of receipt of the request.

- 2.4 The following table provides indicative timescales for conclusion of investigations currently underway. Upon completion of an investigation the Hearings Sub Committee is responsible for determining whether it accepts a finding of no failure to observe the Code of Conduct , or that the matter should be referred for consideration at a hearing or to the Adjudication Panel for determination. The timescale for holding a hearing to consider the outcome of a local investigation is normally within three months from completion of that investigation.

<b>Complaint reference</b>	<b>Date of Referrals Sub Committee decision to refer for investigation</b>	<b>Indicative timescale for completion of investigation</b>
DU/MO/107	29 April 2009	Due to conclude mid April
DU/MO/111	12 August 2009	Due to conclude early April
DU/MO/113	14 December 2009	Due to conclude early April
DU/MO/114	3 February 2010	Due to conclude early April
DU/MO/115	20 January 2010	Due to conclude late April
DU /MO/116	20 January 2010	Due to conclude early April
DU/MO/117	3 February 2010	Due to conclude mid-April
DU/MO/119	16 March 2010	Due to conclude early May

### **3. Financial and legal implications**

- 3.1 The cost of local investigations are met from within existing budgets.
- 3.2 The Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008 and associated SfE guidance prescribe the procedures relating to allegations of member misconduct.

### **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 To consider and approve the proposed work programme for 2010/11.
- 4.2 To note the position on complaints referred for investigation by the Referrals Sub Committee.

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