

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>02 JULY 2010</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>GUIDE TO STANDARDS PROCESSES</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC (INTERIM)</b>

**CLASSIFICATION:** Open

## **Purpose**

To consider, in light of the proposed Decentralisation and Localism Bill, a draft guide to the standards processes and framework.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT:**

- (a) Members note the Government's proposal in relation to the wider standards processes and agree that detailed procedure rules are not included in the Council's constitution at this stage.**
- (b) Members comment on the proposed guide to the standards processes and framework**
- (c) An agreed version be made publically available**

## **Key Points Summary**

- In light of the proposed Decentralisation and Localism Bill and its implications on the wider Standards process, it is recommended that detailed procedure rules are not considered for inclusion in the Council's constitution at this stage.
- A draft guide has been drafted which outlines the Standard Committee's processes in respect to complaints received on Members Code of Conduct.
- Each stage of the standards framework is outlined together with possible outcomes.
- It is hoped that this guide will assist Members of the public to better understand the processes and timescales involved.
- The website section of the Standards Committee is currently being reviewed and it is proposed that the new pages will be closely aligned to the structure provided in the guide.

## **Alternative Options**

- 1 Not to make a guide to the standards processes and framework available. However, it is good

practice to ensure that such processes are made widely available.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 2 Due to the recent announcement regarding abolition of the Standards Board regime, changes to standards processes are anticipated. Therefore a guide to the standards processes and framework is proposed to be made publically available. Until such time as the relevant legislation is passed, the statutory framework remains operative.

## **Introduction and Background**

- 3 The Government have proposed a Decentralisation and Localism Bill which will include the abolition of the Standards Board regime. Item 9 on this agenda provides more detailed information on the known impact to Standards for England.
- 4 Given this position, changes to the standards processes and framework are anticipated. In advance of any further legislation, it is proposed to put on hold the Standards processes procedure rules which were to be included in the constitution.
- 5 Being mindful of the need to ensure that additional information about the Committee's processes and the differing stages of the standards framework is made widely available; a guide to these processes has been drafted and is attached as Appendix 1.
- 6 Subject to the view of the Committee, as the website section of the Standards Committee is currently being reviewed it is proposed that the new pages will be closely aligned to the structure provided in the guide.

## **Community Impact**

7. A guide to the Standards processes and framework will help inform members of the public and assist them to engage more effectively with the process.

## **Financial Implications**

8. It is proposed that the information be made publically available.

## **Legal Implications**

9. Until such time as the relevant legislation is passed, the statutory framework remains operative.

## **Risk Management**

10. The availability of a guide of the standards processes and framework to members of the public ensures that information provided is consistent and clear. It is essential that this guide be kept up to date to take account of any new legislation.

## **Consultees**

11. There are none

## **Appendices**

11. Draft guide to Standards processes and framework.

## **Background Papers**

Standards Committee 2 July 2010: Agenda Item 9 - The Future of the Local Government Standards Framework