

STANDARDS COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE AGAINST PLAN – REVIEW SEPTEMBER 2011

Wiltshire Council’s Vision is to create stronger and more resilient communities, underpinned by 3 key goals:

- 1. Deliver high quality, low cost, customer focused services.**
- 2. Ensure local, open, honest decision-making.**
- 3. Working together to support Wiltshire’s communities**

Wiltshire Council Standards Committee Vision is to raise public trust and confidence in local democracy by promoting consistently high standards of conduct throughout local government in Wiltshire

Top Priorities for Action 2011

Standards Committee Goals	Standards Committee Output	Targets	Owner Responsibility	Comments
Promote the ethical well-being of Wiltshire Council by embedding standards further within the Council	Develop local voluntary Code of Conduct and range of possible sanctions for adoption by full Council	Voluntary Code and procedure for receiving and handling complaints developed by September 2011	Nina Wilton	Complete. However, the draft that has been prepared is largely dependent on the detail of the Bill, so may require significant changes as Bill develops on passage through Parliament
		Standards Committee agrees voluntary Code for presentation to full Council – Spring 2012 following Royal Assent for Localism Bill	Ian Gibbons/Nina Wilton/Chair	
		Standards Committee agrees range of possible sanctions, submitted for Cabinet input, and ready for presentation to full Council – Spring 2012	Ian Gibbons/Nina Wilton/Chair	
	Develop proposals for role and composition of Standards Committee informed by detail and scope of new voluntary local Code, any statutory requirements from Localism Bill and Wiltshire Council needs	Consultation document to relevant stakeholders as Bill completes passage through Parliament. Report and recommendations to Council based on stakeholder consultation and Constitution Focus Group feedback. Probable timing late spring 2012	Ian Gibbons/Nina Wilton/Chair	

Work with Parish, Town and City Councils to support them in their application of the local standards framework	<p>Develop training package for Town, Parish and City (TP&C) Councils in conjunction with WALC; finalise and implement programme for delivery of training; monitor the take-up and effectiveness of training.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Nina Wilton / Vice Chair</p>	<p>New training package designed to include reference to proposed changes in Localism Bill. Training offered but limited take-up from T&P Councils</p>
	<p>Monitor developments relating to standards of conduct affecting TP&C Councils in the Localism Bill and develop appropriate support and information for TP&C Councils.</p>	<p>Monitoring on-going. When final amendments to the Bill go through Parliament, assess impact on TP&C Councils and develop appropriate information materials for publication on website and/or support for implementation of local codes (subject to capacity in the Governance Service)</p>	<p>Ian Gibbons/Nina Wilton/Chair</p>	<p>This work is on-going and will not crystallise into outputs until Bill nears completion of its passage through Parliament.</p>
	<p>Develop proposals for support (if relevant) for TP&C Council codes to be produced depending upon detail of Localism Bill</p>	<p>Present to relevant decision making body of the authority in late spring/early summer 2012 – timing depends on passage of Bill through Parliament</p>	<p>Ian Gibbons/Nina Wilton/Chair</p>	
	<p>Provide training event for TP&C councils on the areas of the Localism Bill that affects them</p>	<p>To be arranged when the details of the Bill are known</p>	<p>Nina Wilton/Vice Chair</p>	
Inform and engage the public on standards in local government	<p>Ensure that the Standards Content on the Wiltshire Council Website is easily accessible</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Nina Wilton / Mr. Craig McCallum</p>	<p>Marie Lindsay, Anna Browne and Mr Craig McCallum have developed and refreshed content. Complete – No further action required.</p>

Chairman's Overview.

1. The main area of developmental work since March 2011 has been using the committee's experience of the current local assessment of code of conduct complaints to develop a draft local voluntary code and a range of sanctions. It has taken into account the views of the Constitution Focus Group expressed at its meeting on 13 June 2011. This work is now on hold until the detail of the Localism Bill relating to the Code of Conduct is known.
2. It is disappointing to see that few Town and Parish Councils have not used the training package. This is particularly so as the investigations into code of conduct complaints against town and parish councillors show that some councils would benefit from the training. The committee will continue to provide these councils with information on and assistance with implementing the current Code of Conduct as well as providing information on the detail of the Localism Bill as it becomes available.
3. The work on improving the standards content of the Wiltshire Council website is now complete making the information more accessible to all users of the website.

Other Areas for Action 2011

Standard Committee Goals	Standard Committee Output	Targets	Owner Responsibility	Comments
Apply the local standards framework in a fair, efficient and proportionate manner	Improve efficiency of local assessment process	All Investigating Officers' reports to clearly identify the Findings of Fact wef 1 November 2011 Assessment Sub Committees to give clear direction on areas of complaint to be included in the investigation wef 1 November 2011	Nina Wilton Chairmen of Assessment Sub Committees	
Promote the ethical well-being of Wiltshire Council by embedding standards further within the Council and promote standards in partnerships	Support the Council in moving to a single culture by promoting agreed values Periodic meetings between Chairman, Monitoring Officer, Leader and CE Increased Standards Committee visibility by attendance at Council, Cabinet, committee meetings and at Area Boards Oversight of Council's complaint handling to ensure complaints are dealt with efficiently and lead to improvements in services to the public Review partnership governance arrangements Incorporate agreed values and standards of behaviour in partnership documentation	Consider Wiltshire Council Behaviours Framework at meeting 23 November 2011 Met 3 August 2011. Chairman or Vice Chairman to attend Council Meetings (6 per year) and 50% of Cabinet meetings. SC representation at all Area Boards at least once per year Local Government Ombudsman Report and statistical report to be considered by the Committee annually Scope of Complaints System Review to be considered by committee at meeting 23 November 2011 Complete No timescale has been set for this yet.	Ian Gibbons/Chair Ian Gibbons/Chair Chair/Vice Chair Nina Wilton Nina Wilton Ian Gibbons	Next meeting to be held when details of Localism Bill known This will be explored by the Shaping the Future Group once the Council has introduced its Behaviours Framework.
Work with Parish, Town and City Councils to support them in their application of the local standards framework.	Communicate regularly with TP& C Councils on standards issues	Provide articles in Parish newsletters as required Provide annual digest of code of conduct cases	Nina Wilton /Chair	

