

## Report to the Standards Committee



DATE	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2008
PORTFOLIO	Leadership
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## Code of Conduct Training for Borough and Parish Councillors

### PURPOSE

1. To report the outcomes of the training provided to Borough and Parish Councillors on the Code of Conduct  
To discuss a request from Member Structures and Support Working Group on the compulsory nature of the training

### RECOMMENDATION

2.
  1. That the Committee notes the outcome of the training sessions with Members
  2. That the Committee forms an opinion on the compulsory nature of Code of Conduct Training for elected members.

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.
  1. The information in respect of training delivered is for information only.
  2. In order to respond to a request from the Member Structures and Support Working Group.

### SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

4. At the last meeting of the Standards Committee, members were advised that the Council was planning to host 2 events themed around the Code of Conduct and the associated considerations for Councillors.

All Burnley Borough, Town and Parish Councillors were invited to attend the sessions, with Borough Councillors advised that the training was mandatory.

In total, 39 Councillors attended the training, 32 Borough Councillors and 11 representatives from town and Parish Councils, 4 of the attendees were members of both. 13 Borough Councillors could not attend either event, mainly due to work commitments or holiday and so a further, final session will be organised in the near future. In accordance with the constitutional requirements, discussed later in the report, those members who

have not attended will be contacted to notify them of the requirement to comply. Any further non-compliance will be reported into this Committee.

The evening sessions focussed on the code of conduct for elected members but also aimed to discuss the role of the Standards Committee, as one of the ways to publicise the work that will be done over the municipal year.

Following the 2 programmed sessions, and as part of a wider discussion on Member development, the Member Structures and Support Working Group requested that the Standards Committee reconsider its stance on the compulsory nature of the training.

When the Standards Committee made its recommendations to Council in October 2007 on code of conduct training, they took the view that the amount of changes envisaged over future years would require all Members of the Council to participate in an annual training event to facilitate increased awareness of the code and any annual changes that may arise. A change to the Constitution was agreed at the Full Council meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2007 as follows:

- 3.1 Each Member must attend annual training on the Code of Conduct/ethical standards, in addition to any current requirements to receive training for specific Committees.
- 3.2 Records of attendance will be maintained by the Democracy Team and any apparent failure to attend annual training will be notified in the first place to the Member concerned and if not rectified at the next available session, will be referred to the Standards Committee for further action'.

Members have requested that the Standards Committee re-consider compulsory training for longer serving Councillors, and that the mandatory requirement is made specific to newly elected Councillors only, with the proviso that all other members attend once every 2 years.

The Standards Committee must now consider whether, given the current changing climate relating to ethical standards in local government, to recommend a further amendment to the constitution, in line with Councillors wishes; to maintain the current constitutional requirement or if there were additional measures to the training package that could be implemented to promote changes.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND BUDGET PROVISION**

5. N/A

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6. Should the Committee make a recommendation to Council on changing the compulsory nature of training on the Code of Conduct, the Constitution will be required to be amended in accordance with any future resolution of Council.

## **DETAILS OF CONSULTATION**

7. David Wilcock – Monitoring Officer

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>
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8. Constitution

<b>FURTHER INFORMATION</b>
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<b>PLEASE CONTACT:</b>
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<b>Elaine Newsome</b>
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<b>ALSO:</b>
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<b>David Wilcock</b>
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