



AGENDA

NOTE: In the case of non-members, this agenda is for information only

- Committee** - **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**
- Date & Time** - **TUESDAY, 27 OCTOBER, 2009 AT 2.15 pm**
- Venue** - **NORFOLK ROOM, CONFERENCE SUITE,
ELIZABETH HOUSE, WALPOLE LOKE,
DEREHAM**

Members of the Committee requiring further information, or with specific questions, are asked to raise these with the appropriate officer at least two working days before the meeting. If the information requested is available, this will be provided, and reported to Committee.

Committee Members

Mr. M. Eveling JP (<i>Independent</i>)	Mr. B. Rayner (<i>Parish</i>)
Mrs. J. Jenkins (<i>Independent</i>)(<i>Chairman</i>)	Mr. G. Ridgway (<i>Independent</i>)
Mr. D. Myers (<i>Breckland</i>)	Mr. F. Sharpe (<i>Breckland</i>)
Mrs. M. Oechsle JP (<i>Parish</i>)	Mr. M. Whittley (<i>Parish</i>)
	Mr. D. Williams JP (<i>Breckland</i>)

Persons attending the meeting are requested to turn off mobile telephones

Member Services
Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,
Dereham Norfolk, NR19 1EE

Date: Friday, 16 October 2009

PART A
ITEMS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

	<u>Page(s)</u> <u>herewith</u>
1. <u>MINUTES</u> To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 4 August 2009.	1 - 3
2. <u>APOLOGIES</u> To receive apologies for absence.	
3. <u>URGENT BUSINESS</u> To note whether the Chairman proposes to accept any item as urgent business pursuant to Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4. <u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u> Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests that they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The Members' Code of Conduct requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a personal or prejudicial interest.	
5. <u>NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING</u> To note the names of any non-members wishing to address the meeting.	
6. <u>APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER</u> For Members' information, to note that Maxine O'Mahony was appointed as the Council's statutory Monitoring Officer on 1 October 2009.	
7. <u>REVIEW OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE: MAY 2008 - OCTOBER 2009</u> Report of the Monitoring Officer.	4 - 6
8. <u>LOCAL AUTHORITY PUBLICITY: CODE OF PRACTICE</u> The Chairman has requested that the Committee be given the opportunity to consider the position regarding publicity and the Council's publications. Paragraph 6(c) of the Code of Conduct states: You ... "must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986." The current Code was last amended in 2001 and is currently under review. It provides instructions about the content, style and distribution of promotional activity and material produced by authorities, supplementing the basic requirement in the 1986 Act that authorities must not use their resources for political purposes. A copy of this Code is attached.	7 - 11
9. <u>SFE CONFERENCE 2009</u> To receive delegates' feedback from the Standards for England Conference at Birmingham on 12 th and 13 th October 2009.	

10. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE AND PROTOCOL

The Standards Officer will give a presentation to members on the Council's Complaints Procedure and Protocol following its review.

11. FOR INFORMATION: REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT

The latest information is that there is likely to be a further consultation on proposed wording of the revised Code, and that the new Code will come into effect in May, 2010.

12. NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting on 8 December 2009 at 2.15pm in the Norfolk Room, Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham.

13. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider passing the following resolution:

“That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 2, 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.”

Part B - Items from which the Press and Public are excluded

14. STANDARDS ISSUES IN INVESTMENTS

The Chairman has asked for the opportunity to consider whether there are any standards or code of conduct issues involved in the Council's decisions on investments.

A copy of the Appendix to the Code of Conduct, the General Principles, is attached for information.

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

**Held on Tuesday, 4 August 2009 at 2.15 pm in
Norfolk Room, Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr M.D. Eveling JP	Mr G. Ridgway
Mrs J. Jenkins (Chairman)	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Mrs M. Oechsle	Mr M. Whittley
Mr B.D Rayner	

In Attendance

Susan Allen	- Standards Officer
John Chinnery	- Solicitor & Standards Consultant
Helen McAleer	- Member Services Officer

Action By

29/09 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

30/09 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs. D. Myers and D. Williams.

31/09 APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATION - WATTON TOWN COUNCIL

The Consultant Solicitor explained that this was a standard application by Watton Town Council, for a dispensation in connection with the Charlotte Harvey Trust.

There was nothing unusual or different in the application which was for all 14 members of the Town Council. There was also a request that delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer to grant a dispensation for the same purpose to the new member to be elected to fill an existing vacancy on the Town Council.

The Chairman asked if there could be a general rule where authority was delegated to the Monitoring Officer in other such cases where a vacancy existed.

The Consultant Solicitor thought it was a sensible idea and if the Committee agreed, it would speed matters up.

RESOLVED that

- (1) a dispensation be granted until May 2011 to the following named members of Watton Town Council to enable them to speak and vote on all matters in connection with the Charlotte Harvey Trust, to ensure the smooth running of the business of the Town Council:

Action By

Barbara Anderson, Richard Crabtree, Brian Freeman, Keith Gilbert, Alfred Harvey, Margaret Holmes, Roy Ivory, John McCarthy, Lorraine McCarthy, Alan Osborn, Roy Rudling, Christopher Walls, Michael Wassell and Bryan Wykes;

- (2) the Monitoring Officer be given delegated authority to grant a dispensation for the same purpose to the new member of the Town Council when elected;
- (3) as a general rule in future, when a dispensation was granted to a Town or Parish Council with a vacancy, delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer to grant a dispensation for the same purpose to the new member when elected.

32/09 APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATION - SCARNING PARISH COUNCIL

RESOLVED that a dispensation be granted until May 2011 to Mr. L. Spillman of Scarning Parish Council to enable him to speak and vote on all matters in connection with the Former Highway Surveyor's Land at Daffy Green and the Scarning Fuel Allotment Charity, to ensure the smooth running of the business of the Parish Council.

33/09 LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW

The Standards Officer presented this report which was for information only.

In previous years the report from the Ombudsman had been in letter form and had contained comparisons to previous years. This year the report took the form of an Annual Review.

There had been no more complaints in 2008/09 than in 2007/08 and there was nothing untoward in the report.

Attention was drawn to Appendix 2 of the report which listed the average time taken to respond to complaints by the Council. The Standards Officer explained that Breckland's response time of 17 days was well within the required 28 day deadline and was also the quickest response time of all the Norfolk authorities, which ranged from 18 days to 46 days.

A Member asked if the number of complaints dealt with by other authorities was known as this might explain their longer response times. The Standards Officer did not have this information.

The Consultant Solicitor said that the report showed that the Council was acting properly and well. There had been few complaints, three local settlements and no formal findings of maladministration. The fact that Breckland had the best response time showed that the Council took complaints seriously. He felt this was an opportunity for the Committee to make congratulatory comments to the Council.

Action By

RESOLVED to congratulate the Council on its performance based on the Ombudsman's report for the year and to look forward to that standard being maintained. The Standards Committee would do everything it could to help in this regard.

A Member asked about the number of Planning complaints and enquired if Capita would take responsibility for future complaints.

The Consultant Solicitor said that there were various provisions in the Capita contract for standards and performance to be maintained but that ultimately responsibility for dealing with complaints still rested with the Council.

The report was noted.

34/09 UPDATE ON AMENDED CODE OF CONDUCT

The Consultant Solicitor had heard nothing about the update and so he had contacted the Standards Board for England and been told that they did not know when the amended Code would be issued and that it might be as late as spring 2010.

This had a knock on effect on training which had been put off awaiting the new Code. A timetable needed to be arranged to provide Members with training on the Code as it stood at the moment.

The Committee was asked if there were any areas that they considered needed to be particularly addressed and a Member asked for more training to be provided on the difference between personal and prejudicial interests and when it was necessary for a Councillor to leave the room during a meeting.

On a Parish Council level a Member asked if individual Councillors were responsible only for their own actions or if they were responsible if they knew of an undeclared interest by another Councillor.

Under the previous code the Clause requiring Councillors to report such instances had been removed and it would not normally be a breach of the Code for not reporting such an incident.

35/09 NEXT MEETING

Arrangements for the next meeting on 15 September 2009 were noted.

The meeting closed at 2.40 pm

CHAIRMAN

**Report of the Monitoring Officer to the
STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 27 OCTOBER, 2009**

REVIEW OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE: MAY 2008 – OCTOBER 2009

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 An overview of the last 18 months of the Standards function is followed by a request for the views of the Committee on the future role of the Committee.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The view and comments of the Committee are requested.

Note: In preparing this report, due regard has been had to equality of opportunity, human rights, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental and risk management considerations as appropriate. Relevant officers have been consulted in relation to any legal, financial or human resources implications and comments received are reflected in the report.

3. Assessment of last 18 months

- 3.1 From May 2008, the law was changed so that all formal complaints against councillors in the Breckland District (from both district and town/parish councils) have to be made to and assessed/dealt with initially by Breckland's Standards Committee and Sub-Committees. At the time, the new laws also required the Chairmen of the Standards Committee and any sub-committees to be one of the independent members (i.e. a non-councillor).
- 3.2 For the Standards function, the main factors during the first 18 months of this new regime have been:
- ⤴ a consistent but fairly low level of enquiries about member behaviour
 - ⤴ a lower than expected number of formal complaints received by the Council
 - ⤴ the formal drafting and approval of standards procedures in accordance with the new regulations
 - ⤴ satisfactory testing of the new procedures with 7 assessments, 1 consideration of Investigating Officer reports and 1 hearing, all of which proceeded well and within statutory timescales
 - ⤴ 2 issues of the Standards Town and Parish Newsletter
 - ⤴ specific targeted advice sessions for Watton Town Council, Weasenham All Saints Parish Council and Scarning Parish Council
 - ⤴ investigation of a general complaint by Weeting Parish Council
 - ⤴ clarification of and continuing advice to Breckland members on the LDF process
 - ⤴ detailed reply to Consultation from the Department of Communities and Local Government on proposed changes to the Code of Conduct.
 - ⤴ Informal training from time to time on the application of the Code to planning, licensing, etc.

3.3 While a small number of scheduled Standards Committees have been cancelled (4) for lack of business, various Sub-Committees have been held as and when required during the period.

3.4 The above record would appear to indicate that the Standards function has been satisfactorily discharged.

4. The next 12 to 18 months

4.1 With the recent changes to the Council's structures and the new Monitoring Officer, it is an appropriate time to re-assess where Standards is going in Breckland, and whether any changes in procedures or emphasis would be beneficial.

4.2 For example, the committee may:

- ^ wish to seek a closer spirit of co-operation and integration with the rest of the Council
- ^ consider that they have a valuable role to play in reporting to the Council how members of the public are likely to take what they are saying and doing
- ^ look for a better understanding by the Standards Committee of the pressures on individual members, both generally and particularly with respect to the Code of Conduct
- ^ request Cabinet to give their views on this Report.

4.3 The views and comments of the Committee are requested.

5. Risk and Financial Implications

5.1 Risk

5.1.1 I have completed the Risk Management questionnaire and this report does not require a risk assessment because the issues covered by the recommendations are not significant in terms of risk.

5.2 Financial

5.2.1 None.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 None.

7. Other Implications

- a) Equalities: There are no Equalities implications.
- b) Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998: None
- c) Section 40, Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006: None
- d) Human Resources: None
- e) Human Rights: None.
- f) Other: [e.g. Children's Act 2004] None

8. Alignment to Council Priorities

8.1 Your Council, Your Services:

- a) Strengthen community consultation and involvement.
- b) Involve people in the design and delivery of services which meet their needs.

9. Ward/Community Affected

9.1 All.

Background Papers

None

Lead Contact Officer:

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Key Decision Status (Executive Decisions only):

Non-Key decision and not on Forward Plan]

DCLG Circular 06/2001: Local Authority Publicity**CODE OF RECOMMENDED PRACTICE****Subject matter**

1. Local authorities have a variety of statutory powers which enable them to produce publicity and circulate it widely, or to assist others to do so. Those commonly used include the powers in sections 111, 142, 144 and 145 of the Local Government Act 1972, sections 69, 88 and 90 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Planning (Scotland) Act 1982; but there are several others.
2. Some of these powers relate directly to the publishing authority's functions. Others give a more general discretion to publicise matters which go beyond an authority's primary responsibilities. For example, section 142(1A) of the 1972 Act and 88(1) of the 1973 Act authorise local authorities to arrange for the publication within their area of information as to the services available in the area provided by them or by other local authorities; and Section 54 of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 empowers local authorities to arrange for the publication within their area of information on questions relating to health or disease.
3. This discretion provides an important degree of flexibility, but also heightens the need for a responsible approach to expenditure decisions.
4. In considering the subject areas in which publicity is to be issued, the following matters will be important:
 - (i) the publicity should be relevant to the functions of the authority.
 - (ii) it should not duplicate unnecessarily publicity produced by central government, another local authority or another public authority.

Costs

5. Local authorities are accountable to the public for the efficiency and effectiveness of their expenditure, in the first instance through the audit arrangements.
6. For publicity, as for all other expenditure, the aim should therefore be to achieve the greatest possible cost-effectiveness.
7. To achieve this, there may well be cases where the benefit of higher expenditure to gain better presentation or improve other aspects of publicity will justify the extra cost.
8. Local authorities should therefore always have in mind the extent to which expert advice is needed for publicity.
9. In some cases publicity may justify its cost by virtue of savings which it achieves. More commonly it will be necessary to take a view of the importance of the unquantifiable benefits as compared with other uses to which the resources could be put.
10. In deciding whether the nature and scale of proposed publicity, and consequently its cost, are justified, the following matters will be relevant:
 - (i) whether the publicity is statutorily required or is discretionary.
 - (ii) where it is statutorily required, the purpose to be served by the publicity.
 - (iii) whether the expenditure envisaged is in keeping with the purpose and expected effect of the publicity.

Content and Style

11. Local authorities produce a variety of publicity material. It ranges from factual information

about the services provided by the authority, designed to inform clients or attract new ones, to material necessary to the administration of the authority, such as staff recruitment advertising. There will also be publicity to explain or justify the council's policies either in general, as in the annual report, or on specific topics, for example as background to consultation on the line chosen for a new road.

12. Any publicity describing the council's policies and aims should be as objective as possible, concentrating on facts or explanation or both.

13. Where publicity is used to comment on, or respond to, the policies and proposals of central government, other local authorities or other public authorities, the comment or response should be objective, balanced, informative, and accurate. It should aim to set out the reasons for the council's views, and should not be a prejudiced, unreasoning or political attack on the policies or proposals in question or on those putting them forward. Slogans alone will not be an adequate means of justifying or explaining the authority's views or their policy decisions.

14. Publicity relating to the provision of a service should concentrate on providing factual information about the service.

15. In some cases promotional publicity may be appropriate - for example about the local authority's sports and leisure facilities or about tourist attractions.

16. Publicity touching on issues that are controversial, or on which there are arguments for and against the views or policies of the council, is unavoidable, particularly given the importance of wide consultation whenever material issues arise. Such publicity should be handled with particular care. Issues must be presented clearly, fairly and as simply as possible, although councils should not over-simplify facts, issues or arguments. Again, it is unlikely that slogans alone will achieve the necessary degree of balance, or capture the complexities of opposing political arguments.

17. Publicity should not attack, nor appear to undermine, generally accepted moral standards.

18. Publicity campaigns by local authorities are appropriate in some circumstances: for example, as part of consultation processes where local views are being sought, or to promote the effective and efficient use of local services and facilities, or to attract tourists or investment. Publicity campaigns may also be an appropriate means of influencing public behaviour or attitudes on such matters as health, safety, crime prevention or equal opportunities.

19. Legitimate concern is, however, caused by the use of public resources for some forms of campaigns, which are designed to have a persuasive effect. Publicity campaigns can provide an appropriate means of ensuring that the local community is properly informed about a matter relating to a function of the local authority and about the authority's policies in relation to that function and the reasons for them. But local authorities, like other public authorities, should not use public funds to mount publicity campaigns whose primary purpose is to persuade the public to hold a particular view on a question of policy.

Dissemination

20. The main purposes of local authority publicity are to increase public awareness of the services provided by the authority and the functions it performs; to allow local people to have a real and informed say about issues that affect them; to explain to electors and ratepayers the reasons for particular policies and priorities; and in general to improve local accountability.

21. Information and publicity produced by the council should be made available to all those who want or need it. Local authorities should not discriminate in favour of, or against, persons or groups in the compilation and distribution of material for reasons not connected with the efficiency and effectiveness of issuing the publicity.

22. Where material is distributed on matters closely affecting vulnerable sections of the community - for example, the elderly - particular care should be taken to ensure that it is unambiguous, readily intelligible, and unlikely to cause needless concern to those reading, seeing or listening to it.

23. Local authority newspapers, leaflets, other publicity distributed unsolicited from house to house and information on websites are able to reach far wider audiences than publicity available on application to the council. Councils should give particular consideration to the use of electronic and other new media communication systems. However, councils should ensure that they do not rely solely on such mechanisms and that they do not exclude those without access or easy access to such systems.

24. Such publicity should be targeted as appropriate for its purposes, taking particular care with material touching on politically controversial issues.

25. There is no paragraph 25

26. Local authority newspapers or information bulletins are a special case. They are often a cost-effective means of disseminating information, or facilitating consultation and can provide a means for local people to participate in debate on decisions the council is to take. The advantage of using websites and other information technology for consultations should also be considered. Inevitably such publications will touch on controversial issues and where they do they should treat such issues in an objective and informative way, bearing in mind the principles set out in paragraphs 11-19 of the Code.

27. Where it is important for information to reach a particular target audience, consideration should be given to using the communications networks of other bodies, for example those of voluntary organisations, and making use of electronic communication systems.

Advertising

28. Advertising, especially on billboards or on television and radio, is a highly intrusive medium. It can also be expensive. It may however provide a cost-effective, efficient means of conveying public information to the widest possible audience. Advertising on local radio networks has, for example, been used as a relatively inexpensive means of telling potential clients about local authority services. Advertising can also be the most cost-effective means of publicising a local authority's activities on promoting the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area.

29. The primary criterion for decisions on whether to use advertising should be cost-effectiveness.

30. Advertisements are not normally likely to be appropriate as a means of explaining policy or commenting on proposals, since an advertisement by its nature summarises information, compresses issues and arguments, and markets views and opinions.

31. Advertising in media which cover an area significantly wider than that of the authority is not likely to be an appropriate means of conveying information about a local authority's policies as opposed to attracting people to the authority's area or to use its facilities.

32. The attribution of advertising material leaflets and other forms of publicity that reach the public unsolicited should be clearly set out.

33. It is not acceptable, in terms of public accountability, to use the purchase of advertising space as a disguised means of subsidy to a voluntary, industrial or commercial organisation.

Such support should be given openly through the normal grant arrangements. However, the conditions attached to a grant may require the provision of publicity, including publicity for the work of the authority.

34. Any decision to take advertising space in a publication produced by a voluntary, industrial or commercial organisation should be made only on the grounds that it provides an effective and efficient means of securing the desired publicity.

35. Local authorities should never use advertising as a means of giving financial support to any publication associated with a political party.

Recruitment Advertising

36. Local authorities have respected in their staff employment policies the tradition of a politically impartial public service. Their recruitment publicity should reflect this tradition, and the fact that local authority staff are expected to serve the authority as a whole, whatever its composition from time to time.

37. The content of recruitment publicity and the media chosen for advertising job vacancies should be in keeping with the objective of maintaining the politically independent status of local authority staff.

38. Advertisements for staff should not be placed in party political publications.

Individual Councillors

39. Publicity about individual councillors may include the contact details, the positions they hold in the Council (for example, member of the Executive or Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee), and their responsibilities. Publicity may also include information about individual councillors' proposals, decisions and recommendations only where this is relevant to their position and responsibilities within the Council. All such publicity should be objective and explanatory, and whilst it may acknowledge the part played by individual councillors as holders of particular positions in the Council, personalisation of issues or personal image making should be avoided.

40. Publicity should not be, or liable to misrepresentation as being, party political. Whilst it may be appropriate to describe policies put forward by an individual councillor which are relevant to her/his position and responsibilities within the Council, and to put forward her/his justification in defence of them, this should not be done in party political terms, using political slogans, expressly advocating policies of those of a particular political party or directly attacking policies and opinions of other parties, groups or individuals.

Elections, referendums and petitions

41. The period between the notice of an election and the election itself should preclude proactive publicity in all its forms of candidates and other politicians involved directly in the election. Publicity should not deal with controversial issues or report views, proposals or recommendations in such a way that identifies them with individual members or groups of members. However, it is acceptable for the authority to respond in appropriate circumstances to events and legitimate service enquiries provided that their answers are factual and not party political. Members holding key political or civic positions should be able to comment in an emergency or where there is a genuine need for a member level response to an important event outside the authority's control. Proactive events arranged in this period should not involve members likely to be standing for election.

42. The Local Authorities (Referendums) (Petitions and Directions) (England) Regulations 2000 (which apply under the Local Government Act 2000 to county councils, district councils and London borough councils) prohibit an authority from incurring any expenditure to

- Publish material which appears designed to influence local people in deciding whether or not to sign a petition requesting a referendum on proposals for an elected mayor;
- Assist anyone else in publishing such material; or
- Influence or assist others to influence local people in deciding whether or not to sign a petition.

Publicity in these circumstances should, therefore, be restricted to the publication of factual details which are presented fairly about the petition proposition and to explaining the council's existing arrangements. Local authorities should not mount publicity campaigns whose primary purpose is to persuade the public to hold a particular view in relation to petitions generally or on a specific proposal.

43. County councils, district councils and London borough councils should ensure that any publicity about a referendum under Part II of the Local Government Act 2000 (the 2000 Act) either prior to or during the referendum period is factually accurate and objective. The referendum period means the period beginning with the date on which proposals under Part II of the 2000 Act are sent to the Secretary of State and ending with the date of the referendum. The publicity should not be capable of being perceived as seeking to influence public support for, or opposition to, the referendum proposals and should not associate support for, or opposition to, the proposals with any individual or group. Local authorities must conform with any specific restrictions on publicity activities which are required by Regulations under section 45 of the 2000 Act.

Assistance to others for publicity

44. The principles set out above apply to decisions on publicity issued by local authorities.

They should also be taken into account by local authorities in decisions on assistance to others to issue publicity. In all such decisions local authorities should, to the extent appropriate:

- (a) incorporate the relevant principles of the Code in published guidance for applicants for grants;
- (b) make the observance of that guidance a condition of the grant or other assistance;
- (c) undertake monitoring to ensure that the guidance is observed.

45. It is appropriate for local authorities to help charities and voluntary organisations by arranging for pamphlets or other material produced and paid for by the organisation to be available for collection by the public in public libraries and other suitable locations. Such material should not offend against any legal provision, (authorities may be able to draw on their powers of well-being in section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000) but (subject to this) any such facility should be made available on a fair and equal basis.

THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Selflessness

1. Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity

2. Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity

3. Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

4. Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness

5. Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal Judgement

6. Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

7. Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

Duty to Uphold the Law

8. Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship

9. Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

10. Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.