

## APPENDIX 'D'

### (To report 8 – Recommendations of the Governance Task Group and Promoting the Work of the Standards Committee)

#### Standards Board for England –Examples of Good Practice

**PLEASE NOTE :** (1) *items in italics have not been considered in Surrey.* (2) For the other items there is something in place that is either similar or has the same effect.

#### Engaging Leadership

##### Helping members to follow the Code of Conduct

- *Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council periodically print messages from the standards committee on the reverse side of members' Declaration of Interest forms.*

##### Authorities whose monitoring officer and standards committee work closely with leaders

- *The Chief Executive Officer, Chair of the standards committee, and Monitoring Officer at Guildford Borough Council have a pre-meeting to discuss the agenda items before each standards committee meeting.*
- *At the London Borough of Bexley, the Chief Executive Officer attends a standards committee meeting once a year to discuss ethical issues. They also welcome invitations to meet with the Chair of the standards committee if or when specific ethical issues are identified.*

#### Training and Skill for Members

- **Waveney District Council** *organised a 'Planning Ahead' conference, which gave planning committee members the chance to look at the ethical challenges of the planning process. Speakers from Standards for England and the Planning Advisory Service worked with more than 60 councillors, monitoring officers and planning officers from ten local authorities.*
- **The London Borough of Bromley's** *standards committee will work with a panel of councillors to determine the ethical governance training requirements and processes for new councillors following the May 2010 elections. They also provide specific training for councillors regularly involved in development control deliberations, to ensure that ethical issues relating to planning are fully understood and appropriate guidance issued.*
- **Leeds City Council** *incorporate training on the Code of Conduct into training on other matters, such as annual training provided to members of the planning and licensing committee. This ensures members can see how the Code applies to their role. Leeds have also developed an*

*e-learning package, 'Cracking the Code', which includes briefing notes on frequently asked questions about the Code and example complaints. A similar package for council officers has also been created, and the standards committee are shaping up a set of core competencies for ethical governance to be included in an ethical governance toolkit.*

- **South Cambridgeshire County Council** provided training for all members on 'The Code of Conduct, Pre-Determination and Bias'. All new members receive personal training on both the Code and the work of the standards committee.

### **Communicating Standards**

#### **Publicising the process for making complaints**

- Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council has a dedicated website for standards issues.
- *Bristol City Council places an advert detailing the complaints process on employee payslips.*
- *Dorset County Council's monitoring officer was interviewed on local radio station, Ivel FM.*
- *Some members of the Epping Forest District Council standards committee were interviewed by the local press on conduct issues.*
- *The chair of Plymouth City Council's standards committee gave an interview to the local press.*
- *Taunton Deane Borough Council distributed leaflets in post offices.*

#### **Communicating information to members**

- *At South Holland District Council, complaint outcomes are used in training sessions.*
- *Officers and members at South Kesteven District Council are provided with weekly information detailing decisions and findings that have been made.*
- Taunton Deane Borough Council and Three Rivers District Council both send copies of press releases to all members.

#### **Communicating information to the public**

- *At Taunton Deane Borough Council hearings are held in public and are webcast.*
- South Cambridgeshire District Council's panel chairmen have received media training and advice on how to handle media enquiries.
- South Tyneside Metropolitan District Council has a media protocol that sets out the publicity issued at the various stages of dealing with complaints.

## Unique ways of promoting standards

- *Buckinghamshire County Council holds annual officer quizzes that include questions on standards.*
- **Waveney District Council** has taken a particularly innovative approach to raising the profile of standards amongst young people and the public. *The Young Filmmaker competition asked entrants to produce a short film about ethical governance, the role of the standards committee and the Code of Conduct. The competition was promoted via local media and the winning film was streamed on the council website, and used in new member inductions. This fresh approach to promoting standards was also evident in a 'Ten Principles' poster competition, which called on students to design a series of posters raising awareness of the principles of public life.*
- **The London Borough of Bromley** has created a new section on their website which brings together links to a wide range of governance and feedback information, to make it easier for people seeking advice. They have also launched a dedicated email address for standards queries. The standards committee used a recruitment exercise to boost its profile and raise awareness of its work.
- **Leeds City Council** has developed an internal newsletter called 'Governance Matters' which promotes ethical and corporate governance issues and details the work of their standards committee. *They also contacted the city's many Citizens Advice Bureaux with notices for them to display and letters explaining the new local standards framework, should they be asked to help a member of the public with a complaint about an elected member.*
- **Kent County Council** has developed a clear role description for all councillors, to help local people understand what they can expect from their councillors. It includes a commitment to leading by example and upholding the highest standards of conduct in public life. The role description forms part of the council's constitution and is published on their website.

## Increasing Standards in democracy

### Informing and engaging the public

- **Promoting standards Sites**  
*We Pledge is Waveney District Council's brand new campaign to promote the importance of ethical standards in public life. They launched the campaign in Local Democracy Week 2009, to get a range of public bodies signed up to the Ten General Principles of Public Life. The intention was to maintain trust and make residents of Waveney aware of the standards it can expect from its representatives. The Council made its pledge and committed to the campaign at its meeting on 24 September.*

*Waveney's standards committee contacted Lowestoft College Art and Design department to see if students could assist in producing a range of posters to raise awareness of the Ten Principles. From a number of designs, two were selected to be displayed in Council offices and public reception areas across the district and form the central part of a wider ethical governance awareness campaign.*

***Waveney District Council** launched a public perceptions survey, designed to benchmark public confidence, levels of trust in member integrity, how the public develop their views on ethical behaviour, and awareness of the standards committee. Key results from the survey have been used to inform the council's strategic direction for 2010.*

- **The London Borough of Bromley's** 'Place Survey' reveals a significant improvement in public perceptions of the council's trustworthiness, up from 63% to 73%. This has been achieved through initiatives such as more mainstream involvement for the standards committee in corporate governance and in constitutional and decision-making arrangements, and targeted promotion of the standards committee's work, for example in the council's service guide.
- **The London Borough of Bromley and Leeds City Council's** standards committees both have clear communications plans. These aim to raise the profile and increase understanding of both ethical governance and the standards committee amongst key audiences, such as members, parish councillors and the public.
- **Kent County Council's** Annual Report process is the cornerstone of their approach to monitoring and demonstrating high standards. All members are required to complete an Annual Report, which assesses their conduct and performance and provides feedback on how they could improve. All Annual Reports are published on the council's website, so that members of the public can see how elected members carry out their role. Full details of member's expenses, allowances and registered interests are also published online.