

ETHICAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK MONITORING

Report of the County Solicitor

Recommendation: that the report be noted.

1. The Standards Committee agreed previously that the independent, co-opted, members of the Committee should attend meetings of the Council, the Cabinet and Committees on an ad-hoc basis to observe and monitor compliance with the Council's ethical governance framework, in line with the agreed protocol.
2. Members have, since the report to the previous meeting, attended the following meetings and their views/feedback are summarised at paragraphs 3 to 6 below.

Meeting		Co-opted Member/Observer
Health & Wellbeing Board	16 January 2014	Mr Bull
Devon Education Forum	22 January 2014	Mrs Saltmarsh
Place Scrutiny	23 January 2014	Mr Bull
Appeals	10 February 2014	Mrs Saltmarsh
Farms Estate	13 February 2014	Mr Bull
East Devon HATOC	18 March 2014	Mrs Saltmarsh
Cabinet	9 April 2014	Mrs Saltmarsh

3. The following table summarises feedback received from Members on a number of general issues common to all meetings

Observations:	<i>1 = Very Poor and 5 = Very Good</i>				
	1	2	3	4	5
Punctuality and Attendance of Members				✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓
Appearance and presentation				✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Speeches: clear, relevant, understandable, audio levels, use of microphones etc.,		✓		✓✓✓✓✓	✓
Use of appropriate language				✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓
Members' Conduct & Behaviour				✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Clear identification and declaration of interests				✓	

Effective Chairmanship/conduct of meeting				✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓
Adherence to Agenda				✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	
Listening and responding to advice (from Officers)				✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	

4. While there were a number of other issues raised by independent, co-opted members as part of their observations, as set out below, there were no reports of any specific actions or behaviors that might be felt to have resulted in a potential breach of the Code or warranted further action.
6. Specific observations by the independent co- opted members were that:
- while the new sound system was a distinct improvement some individuals still fail to use it effective;
 - good, informative, understandable presentations;
 - well run meetings; efficiently chaired; questions dealt with seriously and full answers given wherever possible;
 - at budget meetings, members took (as was necessary) a strategic approach and Officers responded professionally at all times, demonstrating a clear grasp of their briefs and roles;
 - where timed agenda were prepared the timings were by and large adhered to but inevitably there were occasions when those giving presentations or members felt rushed; timings need to be realistic
 - Members asked appropriate questions and were thoughtful and considerate in their questioning of appellants; the procedures to be followed were clearly explained to those attending;
 - recognise and applaud the need for any appeals body to agree to a short adjournment if necessary to obtain appropriate advice or check pertinent facts;
 - the arrangements for better delineation between public, officers and member ate d meeting ..and particularly those in the 'public gallery' or not specifically identified could perhaps be improved..
7. This Report has no specific equality, sustainability, legal or public health implications that have not already been assessed and appropriate safeguards and/or actions taken or included within the detailed policies or practices or requirements relating to the conduct of meetings, to safeguard the Council's position.

JAN SHADBOLT

[Electoral Divisions: All]

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for Enquiries: R Hooper

Tel No: 01392 382300 Room: G31

<u>Background Paper</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>File Reference</u>
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Nil