

Report of the Assistant Director Corporate Services (City Solicitor) to the meeting of Standards Committee to be held on 3 December 2009.

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Subject:

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Code Of Conduct - Revised Complaint Form

Summary statement:

Standards Committee is invited to consider adopting an amended Complaint Form to facilitate more effective local assessment of complaints.

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Portfolio:

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Improvement Area:



Suzan Hemingway, Assistant Director Corporate Services (City Solicitor)



1. Summary

- 1.1 Standards Committee is invited to consider adopting an amended Complaints Form to facilitate more effective local assessment of complaints.

2. Background

- 2.1 If an individual indicates to the Monitoring Officer that he/she wishes to submit a formal complaint regarding the conduct of a member of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council or any of the Parish and Town Councils in the Bradford area the complainant is sent a Complaint Form for completion together with a copy of the Code of Conduct. The existing Complaint Form does attempt to provide some guidance as to the way in which a complaint should be articulated but does not make specific reference to the breaches set out in the Paragraphs of the Code of Conduct.
- 2.2 Assessment Sub-Committees have had some difficulty in dealing with complaints submitted where the specific breach in the Code is not clearly articulated. On these occasions the Monitoring Officer has attempted to guide the Assessment Panel in terms of interpreting the allegations in the context of the Code.
- 2.3 At a recent Assessment Panel it was suggested that Standards Committee revisit the existing Complaints Form with a view to improving its content and specifically directing, where possible, complainants to the appropriate paragraphs in the Code of Conduct to assist in assessing complaints at the initial stage.
- 2.4 The Monitoring Officer has considered this request and has updated the Complaints form in the hope that this will result in information provided to the Assessment Panel in a more comprehensive format. The amended Complaints Form is attached at Appendix 1. A tracked change version of the Complaints Form has been produced so that Members can easily identify the proposed amendments.

3. Financial and resource appraisal

- 3.1 There are no financial or resource implications for the proposed amendment to the Complaint Form.

4. Legal appraisal

- 4.1 There are no specific legal implications of this report but it is hoped that the amended Complaint Form will assist in providing a robust and efficient complaints process.

5. Other Implications

5.1 There are no Equal Rights, Sustainability, Community Safety, Human Rights Act, Trade Union Implications arising from this report.

6. Not for Publication documents

6.1 None.

7. Recommendations

7.1 That the Standards Committee consider the proposed amendments to the Complaints Form and indicate whether they agree with the amendments proposed.

Reason for Recommendation

7.2 To ensure that the Complaint Form provides a robust and efficient complaints procedure and ensures that Assessment Sub-Committees have clarity regarding alleged breaches of the Code.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Amended Complaint Form.