

Subject: Publishing a Members' Handbook
on Standards and Ethics

Status: For Publication

Report to: Standards Committee

Date: 24th February 2009

Report of: Executive Director – Business

Portfolio

Holder: Finance and Resources

Key Decision: No

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To outline proposals to introduce a handbook for Members on Standards and Ethics.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objective.

- Well Managed Council (Improvement, Community Network)

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Failure to publish a handbook on Standards and Ethics will not support Councillors in their role and will not support the Standards Committee's statutory responsibility to promote high standards of conduct.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

- 4.1 A number of Protocols and Procedures have recently been agreed and it was suggested at a previous Committee that a handbook be prepared as an easy reference guide for Members. The content of the handbook has been extended to include further guidance on standards and ethics.
- 4.2 A handbook will be prepared to include the following information:-
- Role of the Monitoring Officer
 - Elected Members and Co-Opted Members: What you must do regarding registering interests
 - Role of the Standards Committee
 - Role of the Audit Committee
 - Declarations of Interest
 - The Code of Conduct
 - List of Key Websites
 - Dealing with complaints
 - New local assessment complaints process and procedures
 - Protocols for Standards Committee Members
 - Confidential Information Protocol
 - Guidance note on procedure to be observed at Full Council
 - Civic Protocol
- 4.3 The Committee is asked to consider any other key policies, procedures or protocols which they think it would be useful to include in the handbook.
- 4.4 The Committee is asked to note that once the content has been agreed the information will be produced in a booklet-style which can be used as a portable guide to take to meetings. This was suggested by a Member of the Committee.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 5.1 No specific financial implications arising from the report.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 No additional comments to add to the report.

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

- 7.1 No implications on human resource matters.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The Handbook provides guidance to members on Standards and Ethical matters.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That the Standards Committee agrees the contents page of Handbook and that it be circulated to all Members.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources

11. COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Community Impact Assessment required No

Is a Community Impact Assessment attached No

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached No

Contact Officer	
Name	Heather Moore
Position	Committee and Member Services Manager
Service / Team	Business Directorate / Democratic Services Team
Telephone	01706 252423
Email address	heathermoore@rossendalebc.gov.uk

No background papers