

Update of Code of Conduct Training 2007/08

Report of the Clerk

For further information about this report please contact Sue Kembrey, Clerk and Monitoring Officer, on 01952 383200 or Matthew Cumberbatch, Group Solicitor, on 01952 383255

1 Purpose of Report

This report provides an update to the Standards Committee on further developments regarding Member Code of Conduct training.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to outline any further work to be undertaken during the current municipal year with regard to Member Code of Conduct training and, in particular, how the Standards Board latest training DVD should be disseminated to all Members of the Fire Authority.

3 Background

On 20 November 2007 a further Member Code of Conduct training session, organised by Telford & Wrekin Council, took place at the Civic Offices, Telford. The training was once again provided by Peter Keith-Lucas from Bevan Brittan Solicitors. It was made available to all Members of Telford & Wrekin Council, all Town and Parish Councillors (and Clerks), and invitations were also extended to neighbouring authorities, including Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority, and some Council officers.



4 Details of Training

The training followed the format of the previous Code of Conduct training, which took place on 19 July 2007. There was a total attendance of 63, of which 3 were Members of the Fire Authority, 2 were non-elected Independent Members of its Standards Committee and 1 was an Officer of the Authority. Taking into account training provided by Shropshire County Council and other local councils, a total of 15 out of 17 Members, both non-elected, Independent Members and 6 officers have now attended training in the new Code. This leaves, therefore, only 2 Members, where we have no evidence of their having attended a training session.

5 Further Code of Conduct Training

The Standards Board for England has become more involved in respect of training on the new Code of Conduct and has issued a training DVD, entitled "The Code Uncovered". The DVD was copied (following permission from the Board) and sent to all Members of the Fire Authority's Standards Committee on 29 November 2007. The Committee is now asked to consider whether a copy of the DVD should be sent to all Members of the Fire Authority or whether a screening of the DVD should be provided in the presence of the Monitoring Officer in order that any questions raised can be addressed. The Committee is also asked to consider whether any further Code of Conduct training is required during the current municipal year.

6 Financial Implications

There were sufficient funds within the Member and officer training budgets to cover the £50 attendance cost for those who attended the training on 20 November 2007.

7 Legal Comment

Training for Members on the Member Code of Conduct is not compulsory. Any change on a local level to make such training mandatory would need to be referred to the Fire Authority for agreement.

If a compulsory element to the training was introduced for Fire Authority Members it would (unless otherwise specified) also apply to non-elected Independent Members of the Standards Committee.

There is no provision in the model Code of Conduct for an element of compulsory training. Any complaints would be investigated and determined by the Standards Committee in accordance with the Local Hearing procedures for breach of local protocols.



8 Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Personnel 5 Part 2) and have decided that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report. An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

9 Appendices

There are no appendices attached to this report.

10 Background Papers

Attendance Sheets for Code of Conduct training on 19 July and 20 November 2007

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	*
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial	*	Staff	
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*

