



Report to: Standards Committee

Date: 10 February 2011

Author: Monitoring Officer

Subject: Localism Bill

1. Localism Bill

The Localism Bill is currently going through the legislative process and is expected to secure the Royal Assent by the end of the year. The Bill contains, as anticipated, provisions relating to The Standards regime:

1.1 Standards for England will be abolished however each relevant authority (which will include the Borough Council) will have a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority.

1.2 With the abolition of Standards for England goes the abolition of the National Code of Conduct. The Bill provides for an authority to adopt, if it so wishes, a code dealing with the conduct expected of members. The Bill gives discretion to an authority to:

- a) revise its existing Code of Conduct
- b) adopt an alternative Code
- c) withdraw its existing code without replacing it

1.3 Investigations of an alleged breach of a voluntary Code

If a written allegation of a breach of a voluntary Code is made an authority must:

- a) Consider whether an investigation is appropriate
- b) If so then investigate the allegation in such a manner it thinks fit

1.4 Sanction

If an authority finds that there has been a breach of its Code it will then decide what action if any is required.

1.5 Register of Interest

The Secretary of State may make regulations requiring the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of members' interests.

1.6 Offences

It will be a criminal offence to fail to register an interest, fail to disclose the interest in a meeting of the authority where relevant, and to take part in business of the authority where there is an interest contrary to the regulations.

On conviction a fine and disqualification for up to 5 years may be imposed.

Only the DPP may institute a prosecution.

Members are asked to consider the provisions and consider the implications for the Council.

2. **Minutes of the Hearing Sub-Committee**

The minutes of the Hearing Sub-Committee are attached at Appendix 1.

Members are asked to note the report.

MINUTES

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

HEARING SUB-COMMITTEE

20 DECEMBER 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr JR Baggaley Independent Member (Chair)
Cllr GTP Parkinson Parish Member
Cllr CNFW Pratt Elected Member

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. HEARING

The Sub-Committee heard details of a complaint against a member of the Calverton Parish Council.

The complaint alleged a breach of the provisions of the Code of Conduct Paragraph 3 (i):

You must treat others with respect

Paragraph 5:

You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.

Having heard the evidence and submissions from the member against whom the allegations were made, the Sub-Committee decided that there had been a breach of Paragraph 3 (i) and Paragraph 5.

It was RESOLVED to impose a sanction of censure.