

North East Derbyshire District Council

Standards Committee

15 March 2018

<p>Responses To Parish Council Questionnaire On Training On Ethical Standards</p>
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Report of the Head of Service – Corporate Governance and Solicitor to the Council & Monitoring Officer

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To advise Members of the responses received to the questionnaire undertaken amongst parish councils on training on ethical standards.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 At its meeting in July 2017, the Standards Committee agreed to ask parish councils what arrangements they had in place for their councillors to receive training on ethical standards.
- 1.2 A letter was sent to all the parish and town councils in the District in September 2017. Thirteen responses were received. The responses are summarised at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 The majority of the responses indicate that there are very few arrangements for training on ethical standards, with only a small number of councillors accessing limited training through the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils (DALC).
- 1.4 The District Council has provided a training session jointly with DALC after the election in May 2015 and since then had written out to each parish and town council with an offer to attend to deliver training on ethical standards and the code of conduct. There was very limited take up of this offer.
- 1.5 A training session has been included on the agenda for the District and Parish Liaison Group Business Meeting on 7 March 2018. A further session could be hosted by the District Council should there be sufficient demand.
- 1.6 The governance team will also arrange for a further training session for all parish councillors after the May 2019 election.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The majority of the responses indicate that there are very few arrangements for training on ethical standards amongst the parish councils. A training

session was added to the District and Parish Liaison Group meeting and a further session could be offered, should there be sufficient demand.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

3.1 All the parish councils in the district were sent the questionnaire.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 The Committee agree alternative options for offering training, such as offering to visit each Parish to deliver a session.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

5.1.1 None

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

5.2.1 None arising.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

5.3.1 None

6 Recommendations

6.1 That Members note the responses to the questionnaire on training on ethical standards and the training session that has been provided.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: <i>BDC: Revenue - £75,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £150,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £250,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
District Wards Affected	All
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	All

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title	
Appendix 1	Responses to the questionnaire on training on ethical standards	
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)		
None		
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Appendix 1

What arrangements do you have, if any, for your Councillors to receive training on ethical standards?

- None x 4
- Parish Councillor training is usually undertaken by the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils.
- All Councillors receive a copy of the Code of Conduct and How to be a Good Councillor Handbook on election/co-option to the Council.
- No arrangements at all. Councillors sign that they have “read and understood” the Code of Conduct on appointment. Council subscribe to DALC. Courses circulated to Councillors such as: - Councillor Essential Training; Finance for Councillors. Matlock too far to travel.
- I deliver training to all new Members of the Council. This does include standards as well as roles, a bit of law and financial responsibility
- All new Councillors are encouraged to attend “Essential Councillor Training” provided by DALC and receive the Good Councillors Guide. I am advised by DALC that they consider this would cover most, if not all, aspects of Ethical Standards.
- Councillors looking to do DALC Councillor Essentials Training which includes the Code of Conduct.
- DALC Induction Course for Councillors, Essential Councillor Handbook
- The Parish Council has a training policy for all Councillors and staff. All training offered either via DALC or NEDDC are presented to Councillors and they are invited to attend. Funds available in the budget to pay for any training required.

How many of your Councillors have undertaken this training since May 2015?

- None x 6
- Five
- In-house training by DALC. Approximately nine attended May/June 2015.
- One councillor attended one course at DALC, Bakewell in 2016.
- Four
- Two
- One – New Councillor
- None (apart from District Councillor) who serves on the Parish Council.