

STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 3 DECEMBER 2009

COVERING REPORT FOR MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT

Report of the: **Monitoring Officer**

Status: For consideration and decision

This report supports the Key Aim of effective management of Council resources.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Elaine Bracken

Head of Service Mrs. Christine Nuttall - Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Recommendation: That Members of the Standards Committee and the Performance and Governance Committee are requested to comment on and endorse the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report; and

(a) that the Full Council notes the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report.

Background

1 This is the fifth Annual Report of the Monitoring Officer as attached as an appendix to this report.

Introduction

2 The purpose of the Monitoring Officer's Report is to provide an overview of the work of the Monitoring Officer, the work of the Standards Committee and the general governance arrangements within the Council in the past year and to provide an opportunity to review and learn from experience.

3 The information contained within this Report will also provide Members of the Standards Committee many of whom are Independent Members and Parish and Town Council Members with an overview of the workings of the Council thus providing them with valuable information to facilitate the carrying out of their functions.

Substance of Report

4 The Monitoring Officer's Report sets out the Monitoring Officer's statutory responsibilities, summarises how these duties have been discharged during 2009 in accordance with the Council's Constitution, legislative requirements and draws attention to those issues that will require attention in the next calendar year.

Key Implications

Financial

- 5 The Monitoring Officer's Report has not identified any financial implications for this Council over and above normal requirements.

Impact on and Outcomes for the Community

- 6 The report sets out the work of the Monitoring Officer, Standards Committee and other governance arrangements monitored by other committees within the Council thus providing Members and the public with valuable information which should promote Member and Public confidence in the high ethical standards set by the Council.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 7 The Monitoring Officer's Report has not uncovered any illegality.

Resource (non financial)

- 8 No additional non financial resource implications are identified.

Value For Money and Asset Management

- 9 There are no identifiable value for money and asset management implications associated with the contents of this report.

Equality

- 10 This report has not identified any equality issues.

Sustainability Checklist

- 11 The contents of the Monitoring Officer's report should provide the public with confidence that robust systems exist to enable high ethical standards to be applied across all levels of the authority.

Conclusions

- 12 The Monitoring Officer's report sets out the elements of good governance and demonstrates that robust procedures are in place to raise ethical standards, identify problems and ensure that Members, Officers and the Public are aware of appropriate channels to raise concerns.

Risk Assessment Statement

- 13 The Monitoring Officer's Report increases awareness of the ethical framework and sets out the good governance arrangements that have been set in place. The Monitoring Officer's Report has not identified any illegalities and has not identified any potential illegalities for the next calendar year. The risk of impropriety remains low.

Item No. 4

Sources of Information:

Information supplied by the Standards Board
for England

Information supplied by various officers and
sections of the Council

Ombudsman's Report

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**Christine Nuttall
Monitoring Officer**