



## AGENDA ITEM: 3

### SUMMARY

<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Standards Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> September 2015</b>
<b>PART:</b>	<b>I</b>
If Part II, reason:	

<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>TRAINING FOR MEMBERS OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>
Contact:	Steven Baker, Assistant Director (Chief Executive's Unit) Directline: 01442 228229, internal extension: 2229 steve.baker@dacorum.gov.uk
Purpose of report:	To advise Members of the details of a training session for Members of the Standards Committee to be held at the meeting on 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2015.
Recommendation	That Members be requested to read the attached documents in readiness for the training session to be facilitated by the Monitoring Officer.
Corporate objectives:	The promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by Members of the Council will assist the Council in achieving its priorities of performance excellence and reputation and profile delivery.
Implications: 'Value For Money Implications'	There are financial and efficiency costs to the Council in having to deal with complaints made under the Code of Conduct. There are, therefore, value for money benefits to the Council in striving to ensure that complaints against Members are minimised as far as possible and any complaints that are received are dealt with as cost effectively as possible.
Risk Implications	The risk to the Council in not having in place a robust local standards regime could damage its reputation for good governance and undermine public confidence in the

	Council as a whole.
Monitoring Officer	This is a report prepared by the Assistant Director (Chief Executive's Unit) in his capacity as Monitoring Officer.
Consultees:	None
Background papers:	Code of Conduct For Members

## BACKGROUND REPORT

1. It is proposed to use the meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September as a training session for Members of the Committee which will be facilitated by the Monitoring Officer.
2. The training session will be based around a completely fictitious complaint made by an officer against a member of Dacorum Borough Council. Members will be asked to consider how they should approach conducting a hearing into the complaint. It would assist if Members could read the attached documents before the meeting so that they are familiar with the details of the complaint. Mark Brookes, the Deputy Monitoring Officer, will also be attending to speak to his investigation report and to be available to be questioned by Members.
2. The documents appended are as follows –
 

Appendix One: A pre-hearing summary of the complaint prepared by the Monitoring Officer.

Appendix Two: A copy of the complaint made by Mrs Susan Clarke (a Senior Planning Officer) against Councillor Hardy of Dacorum Borough Council, who is also a member of the Council's Development Control Committee, alleging that Councillor Hardy failed to treat Mrs Clarke and other members of the Planning Department with respect and bullied them.

Appendix Three: A copy of the investigation report.

Appendix Four: A copy of the Council's Complaints Procedure for dealing with complaints that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct.
4. A copy of the Council's Code of Conduct For Members is not attached as the relevant paragraphs of the Code are referred to in the pre-hearing summary and in the investigation report. The Council's Complaints Procedure sets out the procedure to be followed at the hearing (see Appendix 3 of the Complaints Procedure). The session will be led by the Monitoring Officer. It will largely take the form of an

informal discussion as to what are the key questions which emerge both from the complaint and what is said at the hearing itself as it progresses and how these should be addressed by the Members. It may be that other facts come to light during the session and Members will be asked to consider how they would respond to these new issues. There may be a small element of role playing, but If Members are asked to participate in this they will be given a short prepared script to read out (although they can choose to improvise if they prefer).

5. Members will be asked, in consultation with the Independent Person, to arrive at a decision as to whether or not Councillor Hardy has failed to follow the Code of Conduct and, if so, the reasons for their decision. If the Members decide that Councillor Hardy has not followed the Code of Conduct they will, in consultation with the Independent Person, be asked to consider what action, if any, should be taken against Councillor Hardy. Paragraph 8 of the Complaints Procedure sets out the range of actions available to the Standards Committee.
6. Just to emphasise that the scenario is completely made up and any resemblance to real persons living or dead is purely coincidental.