



City of Westminster

ETHICAL GOVERNANCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

“Standards Committees, and indeed monitoring officers, are at the heart of the standards framework. They promote, educate and support members in following the highest standards of conduct and ensuring that those standards are fully owned locally”

(Standards for England)

At Westminster City Council we are not only committed to maintaining high ethical standards, but continually improving our framework to attain the highest standards possible. We recognise the key role our Standards Committee plays in ensuring Westminster City Council is an ethical organisation that promotes as well as practices ethical governance. With a view to this end, we want to learn about the good practices of other Local Authorities and develop our own best practice approach.

Thank you for taking the time to help us with this objective.

Please fill in the details below and answer each question on behalf of your Local Authority as fully as possible.

I would be grateful if you could return your questionnaire by **Friday 17th September 2010**. Contact details are provided on page 10.

Name:

Local Authority:

Job Title:

Address:

Contact number:

E-mail address:

Section A: The Role and Function of the Standards Committee

1. What is the size and composition of your Standards Committee?

Number of Members from the Majority Party:

Number of Members from the Minority Party or Parties:

Number of Independent Members:

2. Please explain why the size and composition of the Standards Committee, detailed above, was selected.

3. Please describe the role your Standards Committee has within your authority and detail its main functions.

4. What role, if any, do the Independent Members of the Standards Committee have outside the Committee? For example, do they attend Council or other Committee meetings or meet with the leaders of the main political parties of your authority?

5. Does your Standards Committee play any role in promoting democracy or ethical standards either internally or externally? If so, please provide details.

6. What have been your Standards Committee's greatest successes or innovations?

7. Do you have a process in place to enable the public, Council employees or Members to question the Standards Committee? If so, please provide details.

8. What input has the Standards Committee had in relation to training Members on the authority's Code of Conduct? Has this training included the Independent Members?

9. What is your best practice approach to dealing with applications for dispensations from the Code of Conduct? Please specify how many applications (on average) you receive.

Section B: Complaints Procedure

1. In what ways, if any, does your Local Authority promote its complaints procedure both internally and externally?

2. What methods did you find most effective when promoting your complaints procedure?

3. On average how long does your complaints investigation procedure last, i.e from receiving a complaint to concluding the matter at a hearing?

4. What do you think are the strengths of the existing Standards Regime with regard to complaints?

5. What, in your view, are the biggest problems with the existing Standards Regime in relation to the way complaints are dealt with?

Section C: Monitoring Officer

1. What has your Local Authority done, if anything, to promote the profile of the Monitoring Officer amongst staff, Members and the public?

2. Please evaluate the effectiveness of the measures taken to promote the profile of the Monitoring Officer.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Please return by post or via e-mail to:

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