

Standards Committee

Annual Return 2010

18 March 2010

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider Cherwell's response to the Standards for England 2010 Annual Return questionnaire.

This report is public

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- (1) To agree Cherwell's draft responses to the Annual Return

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Standards for England Annual Return questionnaire was launched in April 2009. The main purpose is to collect information from Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees on how they maintain high standards of ethical conduct within their authorities.

Proposals

- 1.2 The Annual return provides an opportunity for Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees to tell Standards for England in detail about the particular achievements, successes and difficulties they have in supporting and promoting the ethical framework.
- 1.3 Standards for England use these responses to build a bank of notable practice examples to share across the standards community. The information gathered will allow them to form a national overview of the local operation of the standards framework and help identify its strengths and weaknesses.

- 1.4 The Annual Return questionnaire consists of a series of questions about the following topics:
- Activities of Standards Committees
 - The role of leaders in promoting high standards training
 - Communicating the complaints process and outcomes
 - Member-Officer relations
 - Communicating the register of Member interests
 - Officer conduct
- 1.5 Responses to each question in the Annual Return questionnaire have been drafted and are detailed in Annex 1 for Members of the Committee to comment on.

Conclusion

- 1.6 It is a requirement of the Council to complete the Annual Return questionnaire and Members are therefore recommended to consider these responses and amend as necessary. The Annual Return will be submitted early in April.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 It is important for the Committee to provide Standards for England with an overview of their experience of the ethical framework operation over the past year.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One To agree Cherwell's responses to the Annual Return

Option Two To amend the responses

Consultations

None

Implications

Financial: There are no financial implications
Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance
01295 221551

Legal: It is a requirement on the Council to complete the Annual Return questionnaire

Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal & Democratic Services 01295 221686

Risk Management: There are no risk implications

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & Insurance Officer 01295 221556

Wards Affected

All Wards

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Annual Return 2010 – Questions & Draft Answers
Background Papers	
None	
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