

Ethical Standards Framework Briefing for Cranleigh Parish Council

Robin Pellow, Monitoring Officer

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Presented at Cranleigh Parish Council Meeting

> www.waverley.gov.uk

What will be covered?

- Your Parish Code of Conduct and Standards Regime (copy from your Clerk)
- Declarations of Interest at Meetings and On Register
- Complaints about Councillors
- Areas to Avoid

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- Previous regime evolved from Nolan Committee recommendations - most related to Parliamentary standards problems
- Focus across Waverley is on improving ethical standards
- Serious interest breaches face criminal sanctions
- Emphasis on local resolution for less serious breaches
- Standards Panel decides any sanctions with two Town and Parish Councils members

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

- They seem self-evident, but beware 'blind spots'

■ Parish Councils

- Have all adopted the Waverley Code - desirable if similar at least to Waverley
- Spouse or Partner disclosable pecuniary interests also
- Aim to make as simple as possible to do- T & PC's have responded well

■ Declaring Interests

- Two types of interest to declare now
- DPI – Disclosable Pecuniary Interests
- Non-Pecuniary (other) Interests
- DPI – must withdraw from the meeting

■ Complaints

- DPI category - very serious sanctions (Police/ or ultimately prosecution)
- Others - more flexibility, simpler process with options for other action rather than hearing
- Guiding principle - what contributes to promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct
- WBC Monitoring Officer still receives and investigates complaints for T & PC's

■ Hearings- by Standards Panel

- Waverley looking to review its procedure , no hearings held so far under new process
- If worked through other options and a hearing is still necessary - Panel of three WBC members
- Two Town and Parish reps, one has to be on Hearings Panel for TC/PC member complaints
- Decide if Code breached
- If a breach of Code is found, refer decision to Parish Council to agree appropriate sanction, where PC member is subject of the complaint

■ Sanctions

- For DPI could be criminal offence & sanction
- Others have less severe sanctions than current regime
- Effectively amount to name and shame

- Planning/development control
- Twin –hatted Members
- Outside bodies
- Treating others with respect

- Planning applications
 - 1. Town or Parish on which you sit has submitted observations
 - 2. Amenity Society you are an active member of submits an objection
 - 3. You live in the same road as the application site

What are the relevant considerations?

- If in doubt, ask Clerk, RP, or Emma McQuillan as far in advance as possible
- Emails
- Avoid reply/send to all
- Robust debate but integrity important
- Guiding principle- what will help promote high standards of conduct
- Questions?