

Meeting:	Standards Committee
Date:	19 September 2006
Subject:	High Ethical Standards – Roles of Leader of Council and of Chief Executive
Responsible Officer:	John Robinson, Director of Corporate Governance
Contact Officer:	John Robinson
Portfolio Holder:	Leader
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Part I

## **Section 1: Summary**

### **Decision Required**

To note the proposed revisions to the Constitution (subject to formal consideration by the relevant bodies) which would specifically identify the responsibilities of the Leader and Chief Executive for the high ethical standards of the Authority.

### **Reason for report**

To bring the proposals to the Members' attention. The proposals themselves are a response to the CPA requirements for this issue to be addressed in the Authority's formal governance arrangements. The specified responsibilities of the Leader and Chief Executive in this regard would operate in tandem with the responsibility held by the Standards Committee for promoting and maintaining high ethical standards.

## Benefits

Increased awareness.

## Cost of Proposals

None.

## Risks

If responsibility for high ethical standards were not attributed to the Leader and Chief Executive roles it could detract from the Council's CPA assessment.

## Implications if recommendations rejected

The risks identified above.

## Section 2: Report

### 2. Background

- 2.1 In the context of the formal Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) which the Authority will be undergoing in November 2006, and the information provided to date by the Audit Commission, there are key lines of enquiry (KLOE).
- 2.2 Under KLOE Theme 3, "Capacity", the Criteria for Judgement includes an assessment of the roles of the Leader of the Council and of the Chief Executive in the following terms:-
- (i) Level 2: "have defined roles in ensuring that the code of conduct is observed and ethical behaviour is promoted".
  - (ii) Level 3: "actively promote the importance of the ethical agenda".
- 2.3 Notwithstanding the Authority's perception that the roles of the Leader and of the Chief Executive already encompass these elements, it is a potential criticism that this is not recognised specifically in the governance arrangements.
- 2.4 It is proposed that the existing written remits of the Leader and the Chief Executive be enhanced by the inclusion of specific wording to address the KLOE requirements.
- 2.5 It is proposed to supplement the relevant sections of the Constitution in

Enc. the manner now set out in the attached draft paper.

2.6 The proposals would be submitted to the informal Constitution Review Working Group and then to Council for formal approval.

2.7 It should be further noted that in addition to the above, there is a requirement for the Code of Conduct for Councillors to be integrated into the Council's diversity policies and its duties under the Disability Discrimination and Race Relations Act. The Council's HR Services will be requested to take appropriate steps to ensure integration of the Code of Conduct into the Council's policies in compliance with this requirement.

#### Options Considered

None.

#### Consultation

With the Leader of the Council and the Acting Chief Executive, prior to this Standards Committee meeting.

#### Financial Implications

None.

#### Legal Implications

None.

#### Equalities Impact

No impact.

#### Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations

None.

### **Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents**

Background Documents: The Council's Constitution  
Audit Commission – CPA 2005 Key Lines of Enquiry  
for Corporate Assessment (February 2006)