

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS – PUBLICITY PROTOCOL

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To agree a protocol for dealing with publicity issues related to cases referred to the Standards Board for England

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the draft publicity protocol be adopted as an interim measure and circulated to all members for comment.
- 2.2 That the comments be considered at a future meeting of this Committee.

3. Background

- 3.1 At the moment the Council has no policy for dealing with press queries about cases that have been referred to the Standards Board for England. Each query is currently dealt with as and when it occurs although these have been very infrequent.
- 3.2 Attached as an **Annex** is a draft publicity protocol for discussion by the committee. There could be real benefit in circulating this document in draft to give all members an opportunity to make comments before it is finalised.

4. Implications**4.1 Financial**

None associated with the adoption of the protocol.

4.2 Legal

Comments made during a committee meeting will generally attract quasi-privilege and, therefore, be protected from defamation proceedings. However, the same does not apply to comments made to the press so it is important that any such comments are cleared through the council's Marketing and Communications Team or Legal Services.

Background Papers: Code of Practice on Publicity issued by the Secretary of State under s.4 Local Government Act 1986.