

Report of	Meeting	Date
Corporate Director Governance/ Monitoring Officer	Standards Committee	17 September 2009

PROBITY IN PLANNING: REVISED GUIDANCE NOTE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To notify the Standards Committee of a recently published document by the Local Government Association entitled “probity in planning: the role of councillors and officers – revised guidance note on good planning practice for councillors and officers dealing with planning matters”.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. The guidance be noted.
3. The Committee’s views are requested on any relevant points that should be incorporated into the local code of conduct in planning matters.

BACKGROUND

4. The Council adopted a local code of conduct in planning matters a number of years ago and this Committee expressed a wish to review of this local code when officers reported this guidance note would be produced by the Local Government Association.

CONTENTS OF THE GUIDANCE NOTE

5. Planning decisions involve balancing:
 - the needs and interests of individual constituents and the community, with
 - the need to maintain an ethic of impartial decision-making on what can be highly controversial proposals.
6. Achieving the balance between these two roles is a challenge and the guidance update provides refreshed advice on achieving this balance in the light of changes. It also better reflects local authorities’ roles as place shapers and the enhanced role for councillors as champions of their local communities.
7. It recognises councillors’ ability to participate in discussions prior to the receipt of a planning application on behalf of their communities, and engaging in spatial planning policy formulation. It provides advice on this following the Killian Pretty review’s recommendations. It also advises on how to avoid predetermination or bias in decision making.

ANDREW DOCHERTY
CORPORATE DIRECTOR (GOVERNANCE) / MONITORING OFFICER



Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
probity in planning: the role of councillors and officers – revised guidance note on good planning practice for councillors and officers dealing with planning matters	May 2009	n/a	http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/1940404

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Ruth Rimmington	5118	1 September 2009	ProbityInPlanning