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Standards for England

Decorators: DECED

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Standards Committee

Welcome from the Chair

The people of Oxford are entitled to expect the very highest standards of ethical behaviour from those they elect to the City Council. As a Standards Committee we work very closely with Council staff and elected members to ensure that sound ethical behaviour is embedded into the culture of the organisation.

"We welcome public interest in our work and hope this website provides a useful insight into what we do" (John Lay, August 2010)

The Standards Committee

The principal role of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Councillors across the City and Parish Councils of Oxford and to deal with certain complaints against individual members.

The Standards Committee is supported by an officer of the Council who is known as the Monitoring Officer. At Oxford City Council the Head of Law and Governance undertakes this role.

The Standards Committee does not deal directly with issues of maladministration or service. These should be addressed to the Council through the Council's [Complaints, Comments and Compliments](#) procedure.

Oxford City Council has created a Standards Committee which has an important role in the governance of the Council. It must:

- Give the Council advice on adopting a Local Code of Conduct
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Code

Do it online

- Play it
- Apply for it
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- Have your say
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What's new

- Improved Recycling Scheme - October 2010
- Corporate Plan 2010-13
- Core Strategy examination update
- Museum of Oxford newsletter
- Cleaner, Greener Oxford Campaign

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Freedom of the city

Hot topics

- Improved Recycling Scheme - October 2010
- Summer holiday clubs and playschemes
- Jobs
- Additional recycling containers
- Leisure centres
- Visiting Oxford
- Council meetings

At Oxford City Council, the committee also takes on a range of other duties which are listed in full below.

The work of the Standards Committee is communicated openly to a wider public through this website. The Chair and Vice-Chair regularly meet with Senior Councillors and the Chief Executive to monitor the effectiveness of Ethical Standards policies throughout the Council.

Where appropriate, the council has taken effective action, learning from issues arising from local investigations and determinations.

Standards for England (formerly the Standards Board for England) works with authorities to help them provide support and guidance to members regarding ethical behaviour. Further information on the role of [Standards for England](#) can be found on their website.

How the Conduct of Councillors is regulated

The City Council has a Code of Conduct that sets out the rules governing the behaviour of its Members.

As soon as they are elected, Members must sign up to the City Council's Code of Conduct. This includes all Elected Members, Co-opted and Independent Members.

Members must also sign a Declaration of Interest Form and declare interests where relevant at meetings. Copies of City Councillor's declarations of interest forms can be viewed on our [Register of Councillors' Interests](#) page.

Complaints

The Standards Committee monitors the effectiveness of the code. Where a complaint is made that it has been breached, the Committee will decide whether to investigate the complaint. When a complaint has been investigated the Committee must then decide whether the complaint is well founded, and set a sanction ranging from no further action to three months suspension.

If you believe that a City or Parish Councillor has breached the code of conduct visit the [Complaints Against Councillors](#) page.

Membership of the Standards Committee

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Membership of the Standards Committee

The Committee is made up of five City Council Members and five Independent Members and two members drawn from our Parish Councils.

Name	Role	Further Information
John Lay	Independent member: Chair	Experience in Finance, Education, Housing, International and Community Relations and Local Government and was formerly Deputy Chief Executive with the City Council
Dr Anne Guinnett	Independent Member: Vice Chair	Appointed to the committee in [March 2008] and was appointed Vice Chair [later that year]. She is Director of Corporate Affairs at Oxford Brookes University, and has worked in Oxford since 2005. Anne has held a variety of roles in universities across the country, and for six years was Chair of the North Yorkshire Forum for Voluntary Organisations. Anne is married and lives in West Oxfordshire.
Chris Ballinger	Independent member	
Meryl Dean	Independent member	
Martin Gardner	Independent Member	Appointed as an independent member of the Standards Committee in. He has spent his whole life in Oxford. He is married with two grown up children. He has now retired after working for Thames Valley Police for 39 years and then a local charity. He has during that time been involved in the local community as a school governor, church warden and local sports association secretary.
Councillor Clark Brundin	City Councillor	Elected to the North Ward of the City Council in 2004. He holds a PhD in Mechanical Engineering and is Emeritus Vice Chancellor (Warwick) and Business School Dean (Oxford). Hobbies include sailing, old machinery and history of sciences.
Councillor Stuart Craft	City Councillor	Elected to the Northfield Brook Ward of the City Council in 2002.
Councillor Gill Sanders	City Councillor	Elected to the Littlemore Ward of the City Council in 2006.
Councillor Val Smith	City Councillor	First elected to Blackbird Leys Ward of the City Council in 1987. She is also an Oxfordshire County Councillor, Blackbird Leys Parish Councillor and governor at the Oxford Academy.
Councillor	City Councillor	Elected to the St Mary's Ward at the most recent elections held in

Standards Committee

Name	Role	Further Information
Dick Wolf	Parish Council Representative	Member of Old Marston Parish Council
Nils Bartlett	Parish Council Representative	Member of Blackbird Leys Parish Council
Fred Mogridge	Parish Council Representative	Member of Blackbird Leys Parish Council

The Standards Committee can be contacted through the secretary to the Committee Alec Dubberley on adubberley@oxford.gov.uk or by telephone 01865 252402.

Powers and Duties in Full

- Promoting high standards of conduct in the council
- Advising full council on adopting or revising the members' code of conduct and monitoring how the code is working
- Advising and arranging training for councillors and co-opted and independent committee members on all aspects of the members' code of conduct
- Considering recommendations made by case tribunals held under Section 80 of the Local Government Act 2000
- Considering reports by the monitoring officer or any matter referred by an ethical standards officer
- Carrying out initial assessments, reviews and hearings into allegations of breaches of the members' code of conduct.
- Giving special permission to councillors and co-opted committee members to speak and vote on things they have an interest in
- To consider the granting of dispensations to officers for politically restricted posts
- Considering anything relevant in the Audit Commission's management letter or other correspondence from the Audit Commission
- Overseeing the whistle blowing policy
- Monitoring the council's handling of complaints and considering ombudsman reports
- Monitoring the register of members' interests
- Overseeing the code on councillor-officer relations
- Advising on any other codes of practice or guidance for councillors

The standards committee will carry out roles (a) to (g) for parish councils in the city too.

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