



BUSINESS PLAN

2013 / 2014

FOREWARD

Pic of Convener

This Annual Business Plan expands upon the information contained in our Strategic Plan 2013/17 in which we set out our plans covering the four year period. It provides detail in relation to the first year of the Strategic Plan and sets out how we aim to achieve our strategic objectives.

The Standards Commission was established in January 2002 and was one of the first pieces of legislation enacted by the new Scottish Parliament. It is an independent body whose purpose is to encourage high ethical standards in public life through the promotion and enforcement of Codes of Conduct for Councillors and those appointed to the Boards of Devolved Public Bodies.

We aim to give assurance to Scottish Ministers and the general public as to the integrity of those appointed to public office. By undertaking the actions in this plan, we seek to demonstrate how we can give this assurance.

Our approach is three-fold: Education, Accountability and Sanction.

- **Education** is about promoting the Ethical Standards Framework, and offering guidance and support to advise those in public office as to their roles and responsibilities within legislation.
- **Accountability** is about our ability and responsibility in law, to hold others to account for their individual actions in relation to the Ethical Framework.
- **Sanction** is about ensuring that there is timely and appropriate action against those people who breach the Codes of Conduct and potentially affect public confidence.

We will monitor our operational performance using a balanced scorecard approach and will publish our progress against this plan on a quarterly basis. We are looking forward to greater working with Councils and Public Bodies, and will seek to share best practice and learn from others as appropriate.

Ian's signature

**IAN A GORDON
CONVENER
STANDARDS COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND**

Strategic Objective 1: To promote the Ethical Standards Framework and so encourage recognition of and respect for the Codes of Conduct by the public and other stakeholders

Activities	Measurement	Timescale
<p>1. Regular dialogue with stakeholders to monitor understanding of and respect for the Codes amongst the public, councillors and members of public bodies</p>	<p>a) Proportion of councils and public bodies engaged with over year</p> <p>b) Number of planned events organised for relevant bodies / individuals to attend</p> <p>c) Number of attendees at planned events</p> <p>d) Planned changes to website completed</p> <p>e) Survey results of awareness levels</p>	<p>Throughout year</p> <p>Throughout year</p> <p>Throughout year</p> <p>July 2014</p> <p>March 2014</p>
<p>2. Consistent decision making by the Standards Commission in relation to breach cases and hearings</p>	<p>a) Review of Hearings decisions to ensure consistent decision making</p> <p>b) Completion of identified training undertaken for SCS Members</p>	<p>Throughout year</p> <p>August 2014</p>
<p>3. Engagement with and provision of advice to Scottish Ministers and the Parliament</p>	<p>a) Completion of review of the Model Code of Conduct</p> <p>b) Provision of SCS Annual Report to all MSPs after document laid</p>	<p>June 2013</p> <p>October 2013</p>

Strategic Objective 2: To assist councils and public bodies to achieve the highest ethical standards of conduct and ensure the guidance and support provided by the Standards Commission responds to their needs

Activities	Measurement	Timescale
1. Review complaints referred by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards ('CES) and information obtained from other sources to identify issues for guidance and advise to councils or public bodies	a) Proportion of breach reports passed to Standards Commission from number of initial complaints made to CES b) Changes made to promotional / support material generated for Councils and Public Bodies	Throughout year Throughout year
2. Giving support to the development of education programmes to help councils and public bodies provide training for their councillors and members	a) Number of case studies published to inform training for Councillors and Members b) Development of new tools and techniques to enhance training / promotion materials c) Numbers of requests for guidance on the interpretation of the Codes to the staff and members of councils and public bodies d) Number of breach hearings published	Throughout year Throughout year Ad hoc Throughout year
3. Periodic consultation on the Standards Commission's Guidance document	a) Number of MO / SO Working Group Meetings held	??

Strategic Objective 3: To enforce the Codes of Conduct impartially, timeously and in accordance with legislation

Activities	Measurement	Timescale
1. Monitor Standard Commission actions to ensure compliance with underlying legislation and seek legal advice if appropriate.	a) Number of non-compliance issues that arise b) Number of requests for legal advice required	Throughout year Throughout year
2. Undertake our statutory adjudication role, in relation to alleged breaches of the Codes of Conduct,	a) Number of breach reports referred back to the CES for further investigation. b) Proportion of cases referred where no Hearing occurs c) Levels of sanctions applied for each Hearing	Throughout year Throughout year Throughout year
3. Respond to correspondence within agreed timescales	a) Proportion of cases heard within 12 weeks of decision to hold a hearing b) Proportion of hearing decisions communicated within 15 working days from date of Hearing c) Percentage of correspondence responded to within 20 days of receipt d) Percentage of complaints responded to within 5 days of receipt	Throughout year Throughout year Throughout year Throughout year

Strategic Objective 4: To operate in accordance with the principles of good governance, best value, joint working and working in partnership and to secure continuous improvement

Activities	Measurement	Timescale
1. Collective leadership by the Standards Commission in the promotion of ethical standards in Scotland	a) Completion of Commission Members Annual Appraisals b) Assessment of contribution to the 9 principals of public life	June (annually) March 214
2. Adoption of good practice and governance in the oversight of the Standards Commission's finances and other resources(BV)	a) Implementation of revised business plan and performance management framework b) Successful completion of planned internal and external audit programme	June 2013 March 2014
3. Identification and implementation of opportunities to work jointly or in partnership with other public bodies in order to ensure efficient delivery of the Standards Commissions' role (BV)	a) Identification of strategic partners b) Delivery of agreed programme of material / events / key messages	September 2013 March 2014