



NEWS IN BRIEF

The Standards Commission is now on Twitter! Follow us @StandardsScot for news about our work, Hearings, events and training.

The Standards Commission has updated its standard presentations on the Model Code of Conduct and the Councillors' Code of Conduct to include factors that should be considered when members and councillors are interpreting the provisions in the Codes and also information about recent cases. The standard presentations can be found at

www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/education-and-resources/training.

Four new public bodies, being Crown Estates Scotland, Community Justice Scotland, the Scottish Fiscal Commission and the Scottish Land Commission, became operational on 1 April 2017. These bodies have been added to Schedule 3 of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 and, therefore, fall within the Standards Commission's remit.

New Member Appointed

The Standards Commission is pleased to announce that Mrs Tricia Stewart commenced as a Member of the Standards Commission on 1 April 2017. Mrs Stewart was appointed to replace Mr Matt Smith, whose tenure ended on 31 March 2017.

Mrs Stewart has over 25 years' experience in senior management and leadership positions across a wide range of organisations. She has worked at Board level in corporate, public and not for profit organisations covering the Armed Forces, Retail, FMCG, Care and Leisure sectors.

Mrs Stewart is currently also a Director of Peridot International Ltd, a consultancy focusing on project management, management and HR consultancy.

Roadshows on the Councillors' Code of Conduct

The Standards Commission is intending to hold four regional roadshows for elected members on the Councillors' Code of Conduct in Inverness, Ayr, Glasgow and Edinburgh:

- 5 October 2017 at Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road Inverness.
- 9 November 2017 at South Ayrshire Council, County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr.
- 15 December 2017 at Glasgow City Chambers, George Square, Glasgow
- Edinburgh - to be arranged

Formal invitations to the roadshows and further details will be issued in due course and will also be published on the Standards Commission's website.

The roadshows will provide an opportunity for the Standards Commission to promote the provisions of the Code and provide illustrations and scenarios to help elected members relate its contents to the scenarios they face and situations they may find themselves in when interpreting the Code

We would encourage councillors, whether they are experienced or newly elected to attend a roadshow.

CASES OVERVIEW

Overview

Since the last briefing in March 2017, three cases have been referred to the Standards Commission by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland. The Standards Commission has scheduled three Hearings to consider these cases, which concern councillors or former councillors of Glasgow City Council, the City of Edinburgh Council and East Dunbartonshire Council. In addition, the Standards Commission held five Hearings in respect of a councillor or former councillors from North Lanarkshire Council, the City of Edinburgh Council, West Lothian Council and Aberdeenshire Council.

Outcome of Hearings

The Standards Commission determined there had been breaches of the Councillors' Code of Conduct in respect of the Hearings held concerning two former councillors from North Lanarkshire Council, one former councillor of West Lothian Council and one Aberdeenshire councillor. In the other case, having had regard to the enhanced protection of the freedom of expression afforded to politicians under Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights and also to the specific facts and circumstances of the case, the Standards Commission found a councillor and former councillor of the city of Edinburgh Council had not breached the Councillors' Code of Conduct. A news article on this particular case can be found at <http://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/about-us/news> .

Learning Outcomes from Cases

1. A failure to register an interest appropriately may be inadvertent. However, the registration requirements are an integral part of the Codes of Conduct as they provide the opportunity for openness and transparency in a councillor or member's role and affords members of the public the opportunity to consider whether an interest may or may not influence the member or councillor in their discussion and decision-making.
2. Hearing Panels must undertake a balancing exercise when considering complaints about a breach of the respect and courtesy provisions in the Councillors' Code of Conduct against an elected member's entitlement to enhanced protection of freedom of expression. The Standards Commission intends to publish information on how it undertakes such an exercise in due course.

Details

Details of the outcome of cases and about scheduled Hearings can be found at:
www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/cases/case-list



INTEGRITY IN PUBLIC LIFE

For further information on the support we can offer councillors and members of devolved public bodies, please either speak to your Monitoring Officer or Standards Officer or look out for new information on our website.

Alternatively, please contact us at:

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