



Annual Return form - 2010

Authority name Kent County Council
Primary contact Geoff Wild
Primary contact email geoff.wild@kent.gov.uk

PART 1: COMMUNICATION

Annual Report

Does the standards committee produce an annual report?

Yes

What does the report contain?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A personal statement by the standards committee chairman | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information about the members of the standards committee |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The role of the standards committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The standards committee terms of reference |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information about the Code of Conduct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Statistical information about complaints that have been received |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information about the length of time taken dealing with complaints | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A summary of complaints which have led to investigation, sanction or other action |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Details about training/events provided | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The forward work plan of the standards committee |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Please describe what "Other" contents are in the report.

A summary of the key aspects of the Members' Annual reports

How is the standards committee annual report circulated?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sent to all senior officers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sent to all members |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available on the authority intranet | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available as a specific item on the authority website |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available in the standards committee papers published on the authority website | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included as a full authority meeting agenda item |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publicised in local press | <input type="checkbox"/> Distributed to households |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Available at authority offices | <input type="checkbox"/> Not circulated outside of the standards committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

The report is "Available as a specific item on the authority website", please provide the web address.

kent.gov.uk<http://kent590w3:9070/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=141&Year=2010>

The report is "Available in the standards committee papers published on the authority website", please provide the web address.

kent.gov.uk<http://kent590w3:9070/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=141&Year=2010>

Publicising Complaints

How can the public access information about how to make a complaint against a member?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Through a 'compliments and complaints' type section of the council website | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Through the standards committee section of the website |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complaints leaflets available from the authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Included as part of a council newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information is not available to the public | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

The information is on the "'compliments and complaints' type section of the

council website", please provide the web address.

http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/have_your_say/complaints_and_comments/cour

The information is on "standards committee section of the website", please provide the web address.

<http://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=141>

How can the public access information about the outcome of initial assessment decisions?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Written summary available for public inspection | <input type="checkbox"/> All initial assessment decisions are publicised in the local press |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publicised in the local press only if the subject member agrees | <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment decisions published on the authority website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Articles published in the authority newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

How can the public access information about the outcome of investigations?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hearings are open to the public | <input type="checkbox"/> All investigation outcomes are publicised in the local press |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publicised in the local press only if the subject member agrees | <input type="checkbox"/> Published on the authority website |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Decision notices are available for public inspection | <input type="checkbox"/> Articles in the authority newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Do you have a mechanism in place for measuring the satisfaction of all those involved in allegations of misconduct? For example the member, complainant and witnesses.

No

Communicating the role and work of the standards committee and standards generally

What does the authority do to promote the work of the standards committee and standards generally to the rest of the authority (i.e. internally)?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dedicated standards committee pages on intranet | <input type="checkbox"/> Standards committee has its own newsletter / bulletin |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee issues briefing notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Articles in employee newsletter / bulletin / newspaper |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee independent members observe other authority meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Standards committee independent members contribute to other authority meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

How can the public access information about your standards committee?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dedicated standards committee section on the authority website | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Within 'council and democracy' type section of website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical standards issues have been included in the local press / media | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards committee minutes, agendas, and reports are available to the public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflets and/or posters are placed in public buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> Places articles in the authority newsletter / bulletin / other publication |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Standards committee meetings are observed by members of the public | <input type="checkbox"/> Information is not available to the public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Please provide the web address for the standards committee section on the authority website.

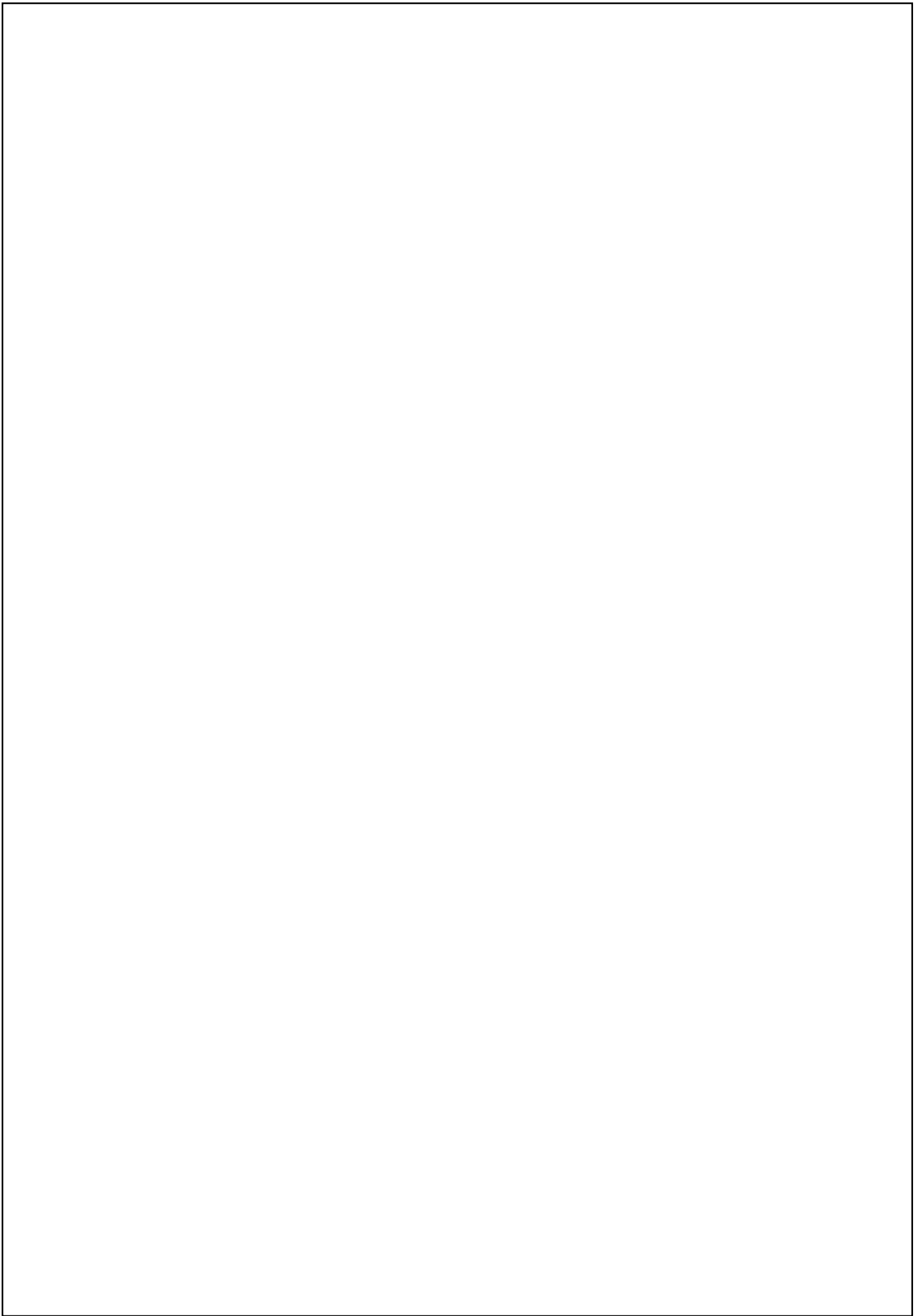
<http://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=141>

Please provide the web address for information within the council and democracy section of your website.

<http://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=141>

What else does the authority do to promote the work of the standards committee and standards generally to the public and other partners?

Kent County Council hosts the regional meetings of Standards Committee independent Members and our independent Chairman hosts these meetings, which are vital for information sharing with key partners in the local government family in Kent and the Police and Fire Authorities. KCC also carries out training on behalf of the Police and Fire Authorities for those Members appointed to serve on those Authorities



PART 2: INFLUENCE

How does the standards committee communicate ethical issues to the senior figures within your authority (for example the Chief Executive and Leader of the Authority, Party Leaders)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Formal meetings between standards committee members and senior figures specifically set up to discuss standards | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informal discussion on particular standards issues |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Senior figure attendance at standards committee meetings | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Officer is a member of or attends Corporate Management Team (or equivalent) meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive or senior member has portfolio responsibility for standards | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair (or other standards committee member) addresses full authority meeting(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

How do the senior figures in your authority demonstrate strong ethical values?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Through a strongly promoted whistle-blowing policy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By ensuring there are references to ethics in the authority vision / objectives |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrating appropriate behaviours | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Senior figure(s) makes personal commitment to standards in statements to public/employees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Through any other method | |

Does your authority have a protocol for partnership working that outlines the standards of behaviour expected of all those working in partnership?

No

What mechanisms does the authority use for dealing with member/officer and/or member/member disputes?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informal discussion/mediation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Officer mediation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair of standards committee mediation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Senior figure mediation (e.g. Chief Executive) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice from Human Resources department | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Solicitor / legal adviser consulted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Informal hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> No mechanisms other than normal complaints process |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

PART 3: TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010, has the authority assessed the training and development needs of authority members in relation to their responsibilities on standards of conduct?

Yes

If yes, what needs were identified?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to the Code of Conduct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elements of the Code of Conduct |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The role and responsibilities of the standards committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ethical governance/behaviour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What training/support was provided during the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to the Code of Conduct | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elements of the Code of Conduct |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Role and responsibilities of the standards committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ethical governance/behaviour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Who received training/support?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Standards committee chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Independent members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other standards committee members | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All authority members |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific authority members with particular needs (e.g. new members, planning committee members) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What methods were employed to give training/support?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal training (presentations/seminars/workshops) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External trainer/speaker |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One on one training | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joint/regional training event |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Online learning | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guidance notes/briefing materials |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standards for England materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ethical governance toolkit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

What other training/support has been provided on areas of an authority member's role or activities they may engage in?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chairing skills | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lobbying |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Predetermination, Predisposition and bias | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blogging and/or the use of social media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electioneering | <input type="checkbox"/> Freedom of Information (FOI) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

In general, how well attended was the training provided?

75% or more of those invited

Please give a brief overview of how standards issues are covered in your induction process for new members of the authority?

For all Members, including twin-hatted Members, a presentation of the key aspects of the Code, including the Nolan Principles; advice on registering and declaring interests, gifts and hospitality; the process for local assessment; rules on IT use.

In which areas of the role and responsibilities of the standards committee has training/support been provided for standards committee members? Please tick all

that apply.

Initial assessments

Reviews

Hearings

Other

Other action/mediation

Investigations

Sanctions

PART 4: INVESTIGATIONS

How many investigations have been completed during this period?

2

Of the investigations completed during the period, for how many have external investigators been used?

1

Overall, what was your principle reason for out-sourcing the investigation(s)?
Impartiality

What type of external investigator(s) did you use?

Employee of another authority

Self-employed investigator

Private law firm

Other

What "Other" type of investigators did you use?

Former senior employee and current independent member of another Standards Committee

For the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010, what was the approximate total cost of fees paid to the external investigator(s) for completed cases?

£3500.00

Please provide a brief overview of the processes you have in place to ensure the quality of local investigations.

Only appoint trained investigators with proven experience

End of form