

ITEM NO: 5

REPORT TO:	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
DATE:	24 April 2012
REPORT OF:	Borough Solicitor (Monitoring Officer)
SUBJECT MATTER:	MAINTAINING HIGH STANDARDS OF CONDUCT DURING THE ELECTIONS
REPORT:	<p>The Chief Executive as Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer has been assessed by the Electoral Commission as achieving the highest standards in respect of all areas of performance. This compares very favourably with other Returning Officers within the Northwest region. The Council wishes to maintain its reputation for high standards and it is important, therefore, that whilst the Returning Officers continues to comply with legislation that the ethical governance relating to the process is also maintained in order that the public can have confidence in the integrity of elections. With that end in mind all candidates and agents have signed up to the Council's ethical framework which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Current council policy on CRB checks;(ii) Code of conduct for political parties, candidates and canvassers on the handling of postal vote applications and postal ballot papers which has been agreed by the main political parties.
RECOMMENDATION(S)	<p>The Committee are advised to note the position adopted by the Returning Officer and the advice given to all candidates for the Local Council elections that this Committee expects to be complied with to maintain the high standards of Electoral conduct.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: (Authorised by Borough Treasurer)	<p>There are no significant financial issues arising from this Report.</p>
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS: (Authorised by Borough Solicitor)	<p>These are set out in the report.</p>
RISK MANAGEMENT:	<p>Standards Committees should be aware of the Legal framework and advice being given by the national regulatory body for elections in order that consistency of approach is taken in respect of setting and advising on local ethical and standard issues.</p>
LINKS TO COMMUNITY PLAN:	<p>Support the current arrangements for ethical and corporate governance of the Authority to ensure that the public can have confidence in local government.</p>

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

This report does not contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the Press or members of the public.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

Further information can be obtained from the Council's Borough Solicitor and statutory Monitoring Officer by contacting 0161-342-3028 or by e-mail Sandra.Stewart@tameside.gov.uk