The Ethical Framework of Local Government
Building Confidence in Democracy
27th January 2005 • Central London

Chair:
Professor Richard Chapman, Chairman,
City of Durham Standards Committee and
Emeritus Professor on Politics, Durham University

Keynote Speaker:
Robert Behrens,
Secretary,
Committee on Standards In Public Life

Speakers Include:
Paul Hoey,
Head of Policy and Guidance,
Standards Board for England

Chris Mole MP

Mr Philip Blair,
Director of Co-operation for Local and Regional Democracy,
Council of Europe

Mirza Ahmad, MBA LLM
Barrister,
Chief Legal Officer,
Birmingham City Council
and
Lead Officer for ACSeS on Ethical Framework Issues

Claer Lloyd Jones,
Director of Law and Democratic Services,
London Borough of Hackney

A Capita Conference
CHAIR: Professor Richard Chapman, Chairman, City of Durham Standards Committee and Emeritus Professor on Politics, Durham University

Programme

09.00 Registration and Coffee

09.50 Chair’s Opening Remarks

10.00 Ethics and Proportionality: Getting the Balance Right
   - The current work of the Commission
   - Is government all about service delivery: where do ethics stand?
   - Recommendations for creating the right ethical culture in local government
   - Guidance and education
   - Perception of standards in local government and influences on opinion
   Robert Behrens, Secretary, Committee on Standards in Public Life

10.30 Questions and Discussion

10.40 The Role of the Standards Board
   - The current situation and recent developments
   - Promoting good conduct and increasing public confidence in local representatives
   - Local ownership through investigations
   - Advice and guidance
   Paul Hoey, Head of Policy and Guidance, Standards Board for England

11.10 Questions and Discussion

11.20 Tea and Coffee

11.40 The Ethical Framework of Local Government
   Chris Mole MP

12.10 Questions and Discussion

12.20 A European Perspective on Public Ethics in Local Government
   - Are people losing confidence in public authorities?
   - Strategies for combating corruption and promoting ethical behaviour in local authorities
   - Other Council of Europe initiatives and recommendations
   - Handbook of good practice on public ethics at local level
   Mr Philip Blair, Director of Co-operation for Local and Regional Democracy, Council of Europe

12.50 Questions and Discussion

13.00 Lunch

14.00 Ethical Framework for Parish and Town Councils
   - Applying the code to all tiers of local government
   - Links between tiers of authorities
   - Working in partnership with unitary and district authorities
   - The way forward
   Tim Ricketts, Head of Legal Services, National Association of Local Councils

14.30 Questions and Discussion

14.40 Ethics, Reputation Management and Community Leadership
   - The bigger picture – the changing face of local governance
   - Importance of ethics and community leadership in the bigger picture
   - Role of Monitoring Officers (and other Statutory Officers) as promoters of high ethical standards to engender trust and public confidence in local governance
   - Reputation management for councils on a case by case basis
   Mirza Ahmad, MBA LLM Barrister, Chief Legal Officer, Birmingham City Council and Lead Officer for ACSeS on Ethical Framework Issues and Chairman, Bar Association for Local Government & the Public Service

15.10 Questions and Discussion

15.20 Creating the Right Environment in your Local Council for Ethical Behaviour and for Fighting Fraud and Corruption
   - Training and development
   - Improving monitoring arrangements and developing compliance measures
   - Raising awareness for staff, public and other key stakeholders
   - Whistle blowing procedures
   Claer Lloyd Jones, Director of Law and Democratic Services, London Borough of Hackney

15.50 Questions and Discussion

16.00 Chair’s Closing Remarks and Close of Conference
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Who Should Attend?
Local Authority representatives including:
- Monitoring Officers
- Heads of Legal Services
- Members of Standards Committees
- Scrutiny Officers
- PR and Communications
- Heads of Finance
- Chief Executives
- Councillors

Representatives from organisations such as:
- The Standards Board
- ACSeS
- ODPM
- Audit Commission
- Local Government Associations
- Academic and Research Institutions

Forthcoming Events for 2005:
The Future Councillor, Central London, February 2005

The Ethical Framework of Local Government
With the imminent publication of the Committee on Standards in Public Life’s tenth report, and codes of conduct under review, the issue of the ethical framework of local government is rapidly gaining momentum and pushing itself to the forefront of the political agenda.

Councils are expected to embrace a culture of openness and accountability, acting as role models of ethical behaviour and effective scrutiny. In order to encourage public trust in local government, the conduct of both elected members and council employees in local government needs to be of the highest standard.

Instances of corruption and misbehaviour are rare in local government, however scandals involving public servants can be detrimental to the public’s perception of a council and it is therefore important to have in place the mechanisms and the culture to prevent misconduct and deal with it effectively.

Why should you attend this Conference?
Whereas most Conferences tend to focus solely on member’s codes of conduct, this event has been uniquely designed and researched to look at the wider role of ethics in local government, dealing with issues such as reputation management, organisational change, proportionality and scrutiny. The Conference is timed perfectly, enabling delegates to discuss and reflect upon the results of the Committee on Standards in Public Life’s report on the ethical framework of local government, scheduled for publication at the end of the year.

Benefits of Attending:
- Hear from local councils, similar to your own, on how to ensure that ethics and probity remain at the heart of your council’s agenda
- Examine and discuss the challenges of applying the member’s code of conduct to all tiers of government
- Examine the role of the Standards Board in the local government modernisation agenda
- Hear about the Council of Europe’s initiatives and strategies for combating corruption and promoting ethical behaviour at the local government level
- Look at the role of ethical standards in addressing negative public perceptions of local government
- Network with fellow delegates and discuss issues that arise throughout the day

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Registration form

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