

# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Standards

**Date:** 28 July 2005

**Chairman:** Dr D Hawes

**Item:** 10

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## **1. STANDARDS COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2004/05**

### **Recommending:**

**(1) To receive the third annual report of the Standards Committee attached as Annex 1; and**

**(2) To adopt the protocol on gifts and hospitality attached as Annex 2.**

1.1 The third annual report of the Epping Forest District Standards Committee is attached as Annex 1.

1.2 The aim of the report is to describe some of the issues which have arisen since the last report of the Committee and future developments.

1.3 The main activities of the Committee have related to:

(a) codes of conduct issues;

(b) the framework for adjudicating/investigating allegations against elected members;

(c) general advice on ethical issues;

(d) registration of members' interests;

(e) registration of gifts and hospitality; and

(f) allegations about individual councillors dealt with by the Standards Board.

1.4 We are also recommending adoption of a protocol on acceptance of gifts and hospitality. This is designed to support the duty of elected and co-opted Councillors under the Codes of Conduct to record gifts and hospitality of a value in excess of £25. The protocol sets out some definitions and guidance on what can be accepted and where caution may be necessary.

1.5 We recommend as set out in the commencement of this report.