

**Chairman's Introduction** *"This report has been produced to give members of the Police Authority and the wider public an overview of the work of the Standards Committee during 2009. The Committee fulfils a vital role in ensuring the maintenance of high standards and compliance with the Code of Conduct and I trust that this short report will give you a flavour of the progress made over the last year in developing the standards agenda across the Authority".* Helen Waller, Chairman

## Membership

The membership of the Committee changed this year when the long serving Chairman, John Wilding's term of appointment came to an end. John had been chairman of the Committee since its inauguration in December 2001.

The Committee at its meeting in August appointed Helen Waller, an independent Member, as its chairman for the year. The current membership of the Committee is therefore as follows:-

Police Authority Members	Independent Members
David Cargill	Helen Waller (Chairman)
Emily Lam	Darren Willetts
Brian Maher	Harry Mawdsley
Terry Savage	



## Annual Assembly

The Chairman, Helen Waller, and Darren Willetts represented the Committee at the Annual Assembly of Standards Committees held in Birmingham on 12 & 13 October 2009. Key points from the session were reported back to the Committee at its meeting in December

## Committee activity

The Standards Committee met on two occasions during the year. The meeting in August received feedback on the regional training event which had been held in Preston in June and considered a greater role for the Committee to ensure the better promotion of the standards agenda throughout the Authority.

The second meeting of the Committee took place in December, when Members received the annual governance report, which showed that no breaches in the Code of Conduct had been reported during the year, as well as no declarations for the receipt of gifts or hospitality by Members above the value of £25. The Committee also undertook a review of a number of the Authority's policies, as part of its revised role (see over). Whilst no major issues were found during the review, a number of comments were made on the policies which will be incorporated into future versions of the policies.

The Committee agreed a structured workplan for 2010 which will be monitored through the two meetings of the Committee which have been scheduled for :-

- Thursday 10 June
- Thursday 2 December

*(both commencing at 9.30am)*

## Training

Members of the Committee joined with colleagues from the other standards committees in the North West to receive some training on standards and code of conduct issues. The session, co-ordinated by Cheshire, was held at County Hall in Preston on 16 June and led by Beryl Heath, a former Borough Solicitor in a number of local authorities, as well as more recently a legal advisor to Merseyside Police Authority.

The session focused on three key areas, namely the standards and ethics agenda; how Standards Committee could help promote and maintain high standards; and how the new arrangements for the local assessment of complaints would operate. Delegates worked through a number of practical examples and the session finished with a discussion about the key issues raised.

Feedback received from delegates indicated that 90% found the session either 'very useful' or 'useful' and there are plans to run a similar session with North West colleagues in 2010.

The Authority will be receiving training on standards issues at a session on 26 April to which members of the Standards Committee have been invited. During the year, Members of the Committee joined the Authority to receive training on diversity issues and where appropriate, Committee Members will be invited to future such events to ensure they develop a deeper knowledge of the environment in which the Authority operates.

## Further Information

Further information on the work of the Authority's Standards Committee is available on the website [www.cheshirepa.police.uk](http://www.cheshirepa.police.uk), or by contacting the office on 01244 614003

## Enhanced role

The joint training event in Preston highlighted a number of areas of development for the Committee. At its meeting in August, the Committee reflected on issues raised in Preston and recommended a number of ways in which the Committee could become more proactive. The following enhanced role was discussed by the Committee and subsequently agreed by the Authority on 29 September:-

- A consultation and advisory role in developing and reviewing the Authority's ethical frameworks.
- Undertake an annual review of the payment of Members expenses and allowances, with an opportunity to comment on any proposed changes to the scheme;
- The co-ordination, promotion and involvement in training of Authority Members on standards and ethics issues, particularly relevant to the Code of Conduct
- Monitoring compliance with regards to Members attendance at mandatory training; completion of statutory returns (eg Members' interests); and attendance at meetings.

In addition, the following was agreed to ensure the Committee was better informed of the workings of the Authority:-

- Chairman of the Committee to have a standing invite to the Audit Committee
- Lay members of the Committee to receive, for information, the agendas of the Authority and Audit Committee
- Where appropriate, lay members of the Standards Committee to be involved in Authority training sessions