

Suggested session topics

| Session theme | Format | Description |
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| Standards Update | Plenary | 2 theatre style sessions to kick off the event. 1 session developed for officers, 1 session developed for standards committee members. Gives them an overview of changes to the Code, latest trends, future developments and a Q&A/Discussion forum. |
| Building an ethical team | Plenary or workshop | Suitable for all delegates. How do you build an effective 'ethical management team' – ie how to develop productive, proactive working relationships between the standards committee chair, leader, chief exec and MO. Examples from authority(s) who've done it. How do they work together, what have they achieved? |
| Parish session | Workshop | Ideas needed here – what are the specific parish challenges? What will be new? Is the session for parish reps or for those who work with parishes? |
| Building a fulfilling role | Workshop | Aimed at single purpose authority standards committees (or could be for those standards committees who want to expand their role?). How can you add value when you don't have any cases? How can you build a fulfilling role? What do other proactive, influential committees do? |
| Scrutiny, audit and standards | Workshop | Looking at joint working between these three committees. How can they support each other? Where are the differences in their roles? Arguments for and against joining up these functions from local authorities working to different models. |
| Local assessment back to basics | Workshop | Aimed at less experienced officers and/or new standards committee members. A back to basics guide to the local assessment process, using practical examples and scenarios. |
| Learning from APE | Workshop | Aimed at all delegates. Looking at the sanction and appeal decisions they've made and why they've made them. |
| Predetermination and bias | Workshop | For officers. Repeat or adaptation of this year's very popular session. Should use practical scenarios. |
| Role of standards committee/Maturity model (SC) | Workshop | Developing a successful and 'mature' standards committee (using the 'maturity model'). What do the proactive standards committees actually do? What role and influence do they have, and how did they achieve this? How do they balance this wider way of working with maintaining independence? |

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| Local assessment: Diversity vs consistency (all) | Plenary | Could also be a workshop. Looking at the potential impact of local differences on decision making. What's the best approach – consistency or diversity? |
| Managing challenging behaviour | Workshop | A session particularly for those who work with parishes? What is challenging behaviour in this context. What are the skills you need to handle it and get results? |
| Hearings back to basics | Workshop | See 'Local assessment back to basics'. Similar kind of session looking at hearings. |
| Interests | Workshop | A 'Code refresher' session for new or inexperienced delegates or just those who'd benefit from working through some practical examples. |
| Successful investigations | Workshop | Aimed at new or less experienced officers. What makes an investigation successful, how do you manage the process (step by step) |
| Confidentiality | Workshop | Aimed at all delegates – a refresher session on confidentiality and the local assessment process, ie who do you tell what when. |
| Reflecting principles of public life in decisions | Workshop | Aimed at standards committees. Developing a proportionate response to complaints, investigations and sanctions that reflects the principles of public life (accountability, openness etc). |
| Repeat of Local Standards Live | Plenary or workshop | Suitable for all delegates. Repeat of very successful 2009 session (with new scenarios). A live enactment of scenarios, requiring audience to challenge, question and make decisions on assessment, sanction etc. |
| Ethical partnerships | Workshop | All delegates. Examples from successful ethical partnerships using partnership protocol or similar. |
| Transparency and successful promotion to the public | Workshop | Standards committees. Notable practice in ensuring the public are aware of complaints process, decisions etc (with guidance on how to do this without breaching confidentiality – potential overlap with confidentiality session above). |
| Social networking, the internet and the Code: advising councillors | Plenary or workshop | Officers. Workshop with practical guidance on how to advise councillors on this tricky area. Examples of when it can go wrong and how to help them avoid it. |
| Discussion forums | Plenary | Opportunity for officers and standards committees to share experiences, challenges, solutions. |

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| Code of Conduct: Help or Hindrance | Hall 1 plenary | Debate. Does it get in the way of decision making and delivering services? Or can it improve the quality of decisions (transparency, higher standards of conduct mean improved working relationships between members/parties so smoother process?). A possible opportunity to debate and respond to the 'gagging' etc opinions. |
| Successful mediation | workshop | Officers? Practical examples of how to commission/conduct successful mediation. When does it work best? How does it work? |