



AGENDA ITEM: 6

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE:
20 DECEMBER 2005**

Report of: Council Secretary and Solicitor

Contact for further information: Mrs G L Rowe (Extn. 5004)

SUBJECT: STANDARDS BOARD DECISIONS - VARIOUS

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To advise of the decisions of the Standards Board in relation to SBE 4339.03 – Parish Councillor Lesley Standish-Gore (ref 70), SBE 6815.04 – former Parish Councillor Alistair MacAulay (ref 54) and SBE 8566.04 – Parish Councillor Paul Sergeant (ref 66).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

- 2.1 That Members note the contents of this Report and comment on any lessons to be learned.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted under the Local Government Act 2000 the Standards Board for England investigates written complaints of misconduct.

- 3.2 When a complaint has been investigated by the Ethical Standards Officer (the investigator), he/she sends, in confidence, a draft report to me as Monitoring Officer and later the final report. He/she then prepares a case summary and sends a copy of the case summary, which is not confidential and may be disclosed, to me as Monitoring Officer, for information.
- 3.3 The Standards Board have been focusing on investigations and producing final reports and therefore there has been some delay in producing the case summaries.

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

4.1 Parish Councillor Lesley Standish-Gore

- (a) Complaints were made in 2003 in relation to the conduct of Parish Councillor Standish-Gore and I accordingly received copies of the draft and final reports in December 2004 and January 2005 respectively.
- (b) A copy of the case summary involving Parish Councillor Standish-Gore is attached as Appendix 1 for the Committee's attention. Members will note that the Ethical Standards Officer found that no action needs to be taken.

4.2 Former Parish Councillor Alastair MacAuley

- (a) Complaints were made in May 2004 in relation to the conduct of former Parish Councillor MacAuley and I accordingly received copies of the draft and final reports in February 2005 and March 2005 respectively.
- (b) A copy of the case summary involving former Parish Councillor MacAuley is attached as Appendix 2 for the Committee's attention. Members will note that the Ethical Standards Officer found that no action needs to be taken and states that it was not in the public interest to pursue this matter any further.

4.3 Parish Councillor Paul Sergeant

- (a) A complaint was made in October 2004 in relation to the conduct of Parish Councillor Sergeant and I accordingly received copies of the draft and final reports in July 2005.
- (b) A copy of the case summary involving Parish Councillor Sergeant is attached as Appendix 3 for the Committee's attention. Members will note that the Council found that no action needs to be taken, no breach of the Code was found.

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 5.1 These matters relate to the promotion of high ethical standards at a local level.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Handling correspondence and queries from the Standards Board is incurring a significant resource, which is currently being met from existing provision. As a reduced number of complaints are being referred for investigation by the Board this could have a positive effect in terms of resourcing for this work. However, more matters are being referred for local investigation and an increase in this local role will have resource implications.
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Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Case Summary – Parish Councillor Standish-Gore
- Appendix 2 – Case Summary – former Parish Councillor MacAuley
- Appendix 3 – Case Summary – Parish Councillor Sergeant

STDSCCTTEEDDECISION