

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

HELD: 1 NOVEMBER 2007

Start: 4.30pm

Finish: 5.50pm

PRESENT

Independent Members: J Cailes (Chairman)
P Hanmer (Vice Chairman)
P Hayman

Councillors: Mrs Atherley
Grant
Nolan

Parish Councillors: M Hammond
D Kitson

Officers: Council Secretary & Solicitor
Member Services Manager
Assistant Member Services Manager
Senior Member Services Manager

13. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Independent Member, R Chester.

14. URGENT BUSINESS, IF ANY, INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There were no items of urgent business.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Mrs Atherley and Nolan and Parish Councillors Hammond and Nolan declared a personal interest in item 6 on the agenda 'Visits to District and Parish Council Meetings' as a member of a parish council.

16. MINUTES

The Chairman made reference to minute no. 8, 'Lancashire Standards Conference – 9 July', which resolved that the case studies and model answers received at the conference from the Standards Board, be discussed at the next meeting of the committee.

The Council Secretary and Solicitor advised that the case studies and model answers would be rolled into the Code of Conduct training to be held on 29 November 2007 as the training DVD was to be used today instead.

RESOLVED That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 July 2007 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17. THE REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT

Members of the Committee received a training DVD from the Standards Board for England – “The Code Uncovered”. The DVD used a dramatised scenario to illustrate the lead up to a potentially explosive planning committee meeting, and highlighted the key changes to the revised Code of Conduct. The programme examined the rules about declaring interests, disclosing confidential information and bullying.

RESOLVED That the DVD be noted.

18. VISITS TO DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Committee considered the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor which provided an update on visits being undertaken by Members of the Standards Committee to District and Parish Council meetings.

RESOLVED A That the current position in relation to visits to District and Parish Council meetings as set out in paragraph 4 of the report, be noted.

B That the following visits be confirmed:

- 12 November 2007 to Bickerstaffe Parish Council – Independent Member and Chairman, John Cailles and Parish Councillor Representative, David Kitson
- 14 November 2007 to Halsall Parish Council – Councillor Mrs Una Atherley and Independent Member, Peter Hayman.
- 6 December 2007 to Simonswood Parish Council - Independent Member and Vice-Chairman, Paul Hanmer.

C That members of the committee notify the Assistant Member Services Manager of any future visits they are able to attend as soon as possible.

19. STANDARDS COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER

The Committee considered the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor in relation to the appointment of an Independent Member to serve on the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED That Council be recommended:

A That the Standards Committee continues to comprise 11 members, namely 5 independent members, 2 Parish Councillor representatives, 2 Conservative members and 2 Labour members.

B That Mr Robert Patterson be appointed as an Independent Member of the Standards Committee, to serve for a term of 3 years, 6 months, expiring on the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2011.

20. CODE OF CONDUCT SEMINAR - 29 NOVEMBER 2007

The Committee received an update from the Council Secretary and Solicitor on the Code of Conduct Seminar to be held at Edge Hill University on Thursday, 29 November 2007 at 7.00pm.

RESOLVED That the update on the seminar be noted and the approach endorsed.

21. ANNUAL STANDARDS BOARD CONFERENCE

The Committee considered a report from the Council Secretary and Solicitor which provided details on the Standards Board Conference held on Monday, 15 and Tuesday, 16 October 2007 in Birmingham.

The Council Secretary and Solicitor circulated copies of 'The Daily Detail – Issue 1' and a draft text of the speech delivered by Parmjit Dhanda MP at the conference, for members information.

RESOLVED That the contents of the report be noted, particularly the current position in relation to 'local filter'.

22. OCCASIONAL PAPER - PREDISPOSITION, PREDETERMINATION OR BIAS, AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Committee considered the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor which advised of the receipt of an Occasional Paper and Counsel's advice from the Standards Board for England.

RESOLVED That the contents of the Occasional Paper, Counsel's advice and the factsheet be noted and these documents be brought to the attention of all members.

THE CHAIRMAN