

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

HELD: 22 JULY 2008
Start: 4.30pm
Finish: 5.20pm

PRESENT:

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

Councillors: Rice
Whitby

Parish Councillors: Cheetham
Hammond
Kitson

Officers: Council Secretary and Solicitor
Assistant Member Services Manager

10. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs Atherley and G M Roberts.

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

There were no items of urgent business.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

13. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 12 June 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14. COMPLAINTS TO STANDARDS BOARD 2002-2008

The Committee considered the statistics on complaints regarding district and parish councillors received by the Standards Board for England between 2002 and 8 May 2008.

The Committee was advised that from 8 May 2008 complaints would be dealt with by the Council and that to date none had been received.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

15. MONITORING OFFICER MEETING WITH PARISH CLERKS TO DISCUSS STANDARDS REGIME - JUNE 2008

The Council Secretary and Solicitor provided an update on the meeting she held with Parish Clerks to discuss the Standards regime in June 2008. She advised that a meeting with the Standards Committee and Parish Chairman would be held in due course.

RESOLVED: That the update from the Council Secretary and Solicitor be noted.

16. PROCEDURE FOR THE INTIAL ASSESSMENT OF WRITTEN COMPLAINTS OF BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT INCLUDING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The Committee considered the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor as contained in the Book of Reports on pages 55 to 58(16), which set out the final version of the procedures to be followed in respect of written complaints of breach of the Code of Conduct received under Section 57A(1) of the Local Government Act (the Act) together with the Assessment Criteria.

RESOLVED: A. That the updated procedure to be followed in respect of written complaints of breach of the Code of Conduct received under Section 57A(1) of the Act be as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, and the assessment criteria and documentation contained therein be approved.

B. That these procedures be published as required by Regulation 10(3) by putting them on the Council's website and having copies available on request.

C. That the Council Secretary and Solicitor update and develop the standard documentation as required.

17. CODE OF CONDUCT - MEMBERS' TRAINING - MONITORING

The Committee considered the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor as contained in the Book of Reports on pages 59 to 65, which proposed how members could be trained in the requirements of the Code of Conduct and evaluated the effectiveness of the training undertaken to date.

RESOLVED: A. That the training undertaken and the evaluation of it be noted.

B. That a Seminar/Workshop on the Code of Conduct, for all District and Parish Councillors, be held in November 2008. This to comprise a presentation followed by case studies in Workshop format, at a venue to be selected by the Council Secretary and Solicitor in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.

C. That training is provided to Standards Committee Members on the initial assessment, review and hearing processes as and when complaints are received.

18. STANDARDS COMMITTEE VISITS TO DISTRICT AND PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS - UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Council Secretary and Solicitor as contained in the Book of Reports on pages 67 to 72, 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 to visits to District and Parish Council meetings as set out in paragraph 4 in the report be noted.
- B. That Members of the Committee notify the Assistant Member Services Manager of any future meetings they are able to attend as soon as possible.

THE CHAIRMAN