



**Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held at the Bourges Room - Town Hall
on 8 September 2010**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

S Boast (Chairman), A Smith (Vice-Chairman), D Whiles, B Fearon, O Menendez and R Nesbitt
Councillors Miners, Dodd (Sub) and Jamil (Sub)
Parish Councillors P Froggitt

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Kim Sawyer Deputy Monitoring Officer
Carol Tilley Corporate Governance Manager

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Khan, Fower and Todd.

2. Declaration of Interests (if any)

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2010

The minutes of the meeting held 9 June 2010 were approved.

4. Monitoring Officer's Report

The Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced the report and drew members' attention to paragraph 2.2 (3), which related to consideration at full Council on 26 July 2010 of the Standards Committee's Annual Report. It was clarified that recommendation (3) was to support the proposal to write to the DCLG to state that a **local** regime was supported and that the Standards Committee wished to continue.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that Council had decided that until the Government's intentions were clear in respect of new arrangements for Standards issues, the wisest course of action would be to reduce the work of the Standards Committee to a minimum so that it only fulfilled its statutory requirements.

In response to a question regarding whether it would be appropriate for Standards Committee Members to write to the DCLG independently to give their views, the Deputy Monitoring Officer confirmed that this would be in order, provided it was clear that views were presented as a personal opinion, rather than as the view of the Council.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer reminded members of the statutory obligations of the Committee set out at paragraph 2.4.1, as follows:

- (a) to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members and co-opted members of the authority; and
- (b) to assist members and co-opted members of the authority to observe the authority's code of conduct.

Following debate in respect of the above, the following points were agreed:

- The need for members of the committee to keep updated in terms of training on Standards issues;
- To meet on 3 November (as scheduled) to review the work programme in detail;
- To set the date for each subsequent meeting at the end of every meeting as necessary, rather than having scheduled meetings throughout the year;
- Independent members of the committee would consider reviewing the Code of Conduct at a later stage (possibly after the meeting in November).

The Deputy Monitoring Officer drew attention to the Council's decision to extend the terms of office for each independent Standards Committee member to a term of three years. All current independent members were coming to the end of their respective terms of office between December 2010 and February 2011. It was proposed to progress this informally at this stage in view of the pending Localism bill.

5. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 3 November 2010 at 7.00 p.m.

Meeting closed 7.50 p.m.