



STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH 5 NOVEMBER 2008

Members Present:

Mr S Boast (Chair), Ms. B Fearon, Mr O Menendez, Ms. A Smith, Mr D Whiles
Councillors Lane, Murphy and Trueman
Parish Councillors Batty and Evans

Officers Present:

Helen Edwards, Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer
Carol Tilley, Senior Cabinet Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Miners and Todd.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.2 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Meeting held 3 September 2008

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held 3 September 2008 were approved as an accurate record.

4. Monitoring Officer's Report

The Committee received a report from the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer for consideration. Members noted the report and discussion was held as follows:

4.1 Actions since last meeting:

The training event held on 20 October, which had focused on the way in which complaints against elected Members were dealt with (in particular, dealing with hearings) had proved useful and had been well received by those present. Members were asked to give consideration to any further training topics that might be appropriate.

It was noted that an alternative date had now been identified to hold the training event open to all Members, which aimed to enhance awareness of the new arrangements in respect of the complaints process against elected Members.

4.2 Referrals / Complaints

Members noted that the second quarterly return for the period ending 30 September 2008 had been submitted to the Standards Board, showing that two complaints had been received during this period. Members were advised that one of these had been referred for investigation.

A further complaint had been received since submission of the above return and this had been dealt with at a meeting of the Standards Committee's Assessment Sub Committee held on 27 October. The outcome of this would be reported at the next meeting.

4.3 CRB Checks for Elected Members

Members were asked to consider the new Criminal Records and Employment of Ex-Offenders draft policy, which had been agreed by Employment Committee. The document highlighted suggestions in respect of how it might be amended to relate to Members and input from the Committee was sought in this regard. Following this, a revised version would be circulated to Scrutiny Committee for comment, before being submitted to Cabinet.

During discussion it became apparent that further debate was required with regard to this matter in order to clarify the Committee's position. The Chair therefore suggested that the issue be debated in detail at a separate meeting. However, it was emphasised that this would be the final opportunity for members to discuss this matter.

It was **AGREED** to debate this matter in detail at the next scheduled meeting (3 December 2008).

4.4 Consultation on new Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members and Employees

Members were advised that the consultation document which had been despatched with the agenda was not the correct version. Hard copies of the correct version were circulated during the meeting.

Following brief discussion, Members **AGREED** to defer this item to the meeting of 3 December 2008 in order to allow all Members (a) an opportunity to thoroughly peruse the document and (b) an opportunity to consult with their party colleagues.

4.5 Consultation on Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity

Members were advised that the new Code had not yet been published.

In light of the above, it was **AGREED** to defer this item to a future meeting.

4.6 Planning Committee Voting Analysis

The Committee noted the Voting Analysis in respect of meetings of the Planning and Environmental Protection Committee held 29 July 2008 and 9 September 2008 respectively.

5. Agenda Planning

The Chair requested that the following item be included on the agenda for the meeting of 21 January:

- Update on Work Programme.

Meeting closed at 7.43 p.m.