



STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH 3 DECEMBER 2008

Members Present:

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

Also in attendance:

Councillor Sandford attended the meeting during debate of agenda item 4.

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 Mr Steve Boast.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.2 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Meeting held 5 November 2008

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held 5 November 2008 were approved.

4. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Checks for Elected Members

4.1 The Committee had considered the issue of CRB checks for elected members on a number of previous occasions, however at its meeting of 5 November 2008, Members had decided to revisit the decision previously made and hold further debate with regard to this matter.

The Committee was informed that advice had been received from the CRB stating that a policy requiring all elected Members to undergo a CRB check would potentially be illegal. With this in mind, the Monitoring Officer advised that in her opinion, any policy should be based on risk assessment of an elected Member's position within the Council and that all posts subject to risk assessment should be clarified at annual Council.

Councillor Sandford addressed the Committee in his capacity as Group Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group and stated that his group did not support a policy of universal

checks. It was the view of the group that CRB checks should be sought only where relevant, i.e. that it brought the post-holder into direct contact with children.

Following debate, it was **AGREED**:

- (i) that risk assessments would be carried out in respect of the role and responsibilities of every Member elected to the Council
- (ii) a future meeting would be dedicated to detailed consideration of procedure and implementation;
- (iii) to invite Councillor Sandford to attend the meeting referred to in (ii) above;
- (iv) Final proposals to be submitted to Council before the end of the municipal year.

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

5.1 The Monitoring Officer introduced this report which sought Members' views on the consultation document 'Communities in Control: Real people, real power'. The Committee was advised that the consultation focused on two main issues:

- (i) the application of the Code of Conduct to Members' conduct in their non-official capacity; and
- (ii) the requirement for authorities to have in place a Code of Conduct for employees that reflected the model Code for elected Members.

Members' attention was, in particular, drawn to the questions contained within Annex A of the consultation document.

Following consideration of the paper and the questions raised, Members **AGREED** to request the Monitoring Officer to prepare a draft response which would be circulated to Members of the Committee for final comment and approval prior to the response being submitted to the DCLG on 24 December 2008.

The Committee noted that further consultation relating to the code of recommended practice on local authority publicity had been delayed. This matter would therefore be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

6. Date of Next Meeting

6.1 Members noted the date of the next meeting: 21 January 2009.

Meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

Chairman

Date