

MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON

14 January 2009

5pm-5.31pm

PRESENT

Brian Spencer (Chairman)

COUNCILLORS

Jean Clark
Patrick McClarnon

David Carter
Lesley Rideout

Muriel Jolles
Edna Stevens

APOLOGIES

Manny Doku

David Evans

Eleanor Macy

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

26. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2008 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the correction of the spelling of "assessment" in the heading of Minute 23.

27. MATTERS ARISING

None.

28. REGULATION 17

The Committee received guidance from the Adjudication Panel on the circumstances in which it would consider accepting a reference from a Standards Committee under Regulation 17 of the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008.

RESOLVED that the guidance note from the Adjudication Panel for England on situations where a direct referral from an Initial Assessment Hearing to the Standards Board for England might be appropriate, be noted.

29. **CONSULTATION – CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members were asked to note the consultation response which was sent to the Department of Communities and Local Government on the proposed revisions to the Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED that the consultation response which was sent to the Department of Communities and Local Government on proposed revisions to the Code of Conduct, be noted.

30. **ADJUDICATION ON A REFERRAL TO THE STANDARDS BOARD**

The Committee received a report on the Standard Board's decision on the referral of ex-Councillor John Paul Goddard, for failing to treat others with respect and for bringing his office or authority into disrepute.

The ethical standards officer had found that ex-Councillor Goddard had not brought his office or authority into disrepute, but had breached the Code of Conduct for failing to treat an officer with respect. No further action was needed as he was no longer a Council Member.

RESOLVED that the decision of the Standards Board be noted.

31. **INDEPENDENT MEMBER INTERVIEWS**

The Committee Chairman, Brian Spencer, reported verbally that following interviews of two candidates, Mick Granger would be recommended for appointment as the third independent member of this committee (for a four year term of office).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

32. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chairman ruled the following item as a matter of urgent business to ensure that members secured places at the annual Standards Conference.

(a) **Annual Standards Conference**

The Committee was keen to ensure that places were booked for the annual conference this year.

It was agreed to make the arrangements on the same basis as last year, with the exception of booking places for two independent

members. This would give the opportunity for all three current independent members to have attended a conference.

RESOLVED that places be booked at this year's annual Standards Conference for one member from each political group and two independent members.

33. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following agenda items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified under Paragraph 2 of Part One of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

34. **INITIAL ASSESSMENT (STANDARDS) SUB-COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Initial Assessment (Standards) Sub Committee held on 13 November 2008 be noted.

35. **COMPLAINTS – UPDATE**

Further to minute 24, the Monitoring Officer, Mike White, gave a verbal update on complaint reference 1-1/9/08.

The matter not being concluded, he was taking further action and would report the outcome to a future meeting of this Committee.

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE