

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 26 May 2011 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.20 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Ms A. Griffiths – in the Chair

Dr N. Alphey (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor Mike Badcock
Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Roz Smith
Councillor Val Smith
Professor M. Dean
Mr M. Greenwood

In Attendance Officers: Councillor Don Seale

Whole of meeting Peter Clark, County Solicitor & Monitoring Officer; Geoff Malcolm, Committee Officer

The Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except as insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

51/11 ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2011/12 COUNCIL YEAR

(Agenda No. 1)

RESOLVED: (on a motion by Councillor Bolster, seconded by Councillor Badcock and carried nem. con.) that Ms. A. Griffiths be elected Chairman for the 2011/12 Council Year.

52/11 ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2011/12 COUNCIL YEAR

(Agenda No. 2)

RESOLVED: (on a motion by Councillor Bolster, seconded by Councillor Badcock and carried nem. con.) that Dr. N. Alphey be elected Deputy Chairman for the 2011/12 Council Year.

53/11 SUBORDINATE BODIES

(Agenda No. 3)

RESOLVED: to note that the subordinate bodies shown on the Agenda fell within the responsibility of this Committee and that appointments to them were not needed at the present time.

54/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda No. 4)

Apology from:
Councillor Ann Bonner
Councillor Mrs. C. Fulljames
Councillor David Robertson

55/11 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 6)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2010 (ST6) were approved and signed.

Minute 46/10 (vetting & barring scheme)

The Monitoring Officer undertook to update the position as details became available.

Meeting Rooms

Councillor Seale understood that it was possible for proceedings in the Committee Rooms to be heard outside the Rooms - through for example a hearing aid. This would be a matter of concern particularly in the case of private discussions. Officers were asked to investigate.

56/11 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE 2010/2011

(Agenda No. 8)

Ms. Griffiths, Chairman of the Committee presented her Annual Report (ST8) which summarised the work of the Committee over the last year. Council would consider the report at its meeting on 14 June 2011.

RESOLVED: to endorse the report and thank the Chairman for her work and the report.

57/11 ANNUAL MONITORING OFFICER REPORT

(Agenda No. 9)

The Committee considered the Annual Monitoring Officer Report (ST9).

The following key matters arose during debate:

In relation to declarations of gifts & hospitality:

- Members asked how long declarations stayed on the Register. Officers were asked to remind members.
- Officers were asked to clarify the position about requirements for declaration where a councillor was a member of more than one council.

Scrutiny:

Officers were asked to clarify the ‘call-in’ process where a scrutiny committee had provided recommendation/advice/comment on the topic to Cabinet prior to Cabinet consideration.

..... Paragraph 32 (informal resolution of issues of concern):

Members considered that it would be helpful to include in the Report the number of these issues in future.

Officers were asked to remind / update members on the current definition of ‘bribery’.

RESOLVED: to endorse the Monitoring Officer Report and thank the Monitoring Officer and team for their report and work .

58/11 GUIDANCE DOCUMENT: MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

(Agenda No. 10)

The Committee considered draft guidance (ST10) which the Monitoring Officer had produced to assist councillors with their roles and responsibilities for Councillors appointed to represent the Council on Outside Bodies.

At members’ request officers undertook to:

- remind the relevant councillors about reporting requirements;
- and
- circulate the Guidance to all members.

RESOLVED: to endorse the guidance to members.

59/11 UPDATE ON THE STANDARDS REGIME

(Agenda No. 11)

The Committee considered the update on the impending changes to the Standards regime (ST11) and commented as follows:

- the Committee supported seeking political group members’ and independent members’ views on possible future arrangements for investigating / taking action on serious issues;
- and
- Officers were asked to liaise with the Chairman for a date for the Committee members to meet informally when details of the impending changes became available, possibly in the Autumn, to discuss with the Monitoring Officer the Localism Bill/Act and the options available prior to formal Council reporting.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing