

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2008**

**PRESENT** – *Councillors K Foster, Hirst, and Humphrys*

**PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER** – *Councillor Malowana-Murphy*

**INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE** – *Mr L Loft (Chair), Mr C. Brindle, Ms L. McEwan and Mrs V Webb*

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE-** *Linda Comstive (Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer), Janie Berry (Deputy Head of Legal Services) Sarah Sundhu (Trainee Solicitor) and Paul Jones (Head of Democratic Services)*

**RESOLUTIONS**

**15 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and received apologies for absence from Councillors Graham and Z. Khan and Sue Entwistle.

**16 Minutes of the Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2008**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2008 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**17 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were made.

**18 Matters Arising**

***Update on the Chairs report to Council Forum on 28<sup>th</sup> August***

The Chair updated the Committee on his recent report to the Council Forum. In his report he had promoted the role of this Committee and reminded Members of their responsibilities and encouraged them to attend the Code of Conduct Training scheduled for later this month. He had also explained the rationale for the increase in the number of Independent Members and Parish Councillors on this Committee which had been agreed by Council. It had been a privilege to attend and the Chair expected that he would report annually to the Council Forum on the work of this Committee.

### ***Update on the Recruitment of Independent and Parish Members to the Standards Committee***

The Director of Legal Services reported that 8 Applications had been received for the Independent Member vacancies. Interviews were scheduled to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> November and the Council would be asked to ratify the appointments at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

No Parish applications have been received and the vacancies readvertised. Efforts would continue to recruit to these positions and Councillor Malowana-Murphy offered his support to the process.

### ***Update on the Invitation to the Chief Executive of the Standards Board for England***

The Chief Executive of the Standards Board for England had accepted an invitation to meet with members of this Committee. Unfortunately due to a prior commitment Glenys Stacey was unable to attend this Committee meeting but arrangements would be made for her to attend a future event.

## **19 Training Update**

A report was submitted updating the Committee on different training events being organised for elected representatives.

### ***Code of Conduct Training for Elected Members***

The next session would be held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2008. The session would be conducted by Timothy Mould QC from Landmark Chambers. The session had been organised to engage Councillors who had previously been unable to attend the session held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008.

### ***Code of Conduct Training for Parish Councils***

The next training session for Parish Councils was scheduled to take place 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and an invitation had been extended to the Parish Councillors to attend this event.

### ***Planning and Highways Training***

At the last meeting of this Committee Members had resolved to support the proposal from the Director of Legal Services to recommend that a Councillor may only attend the Planning and Highways Committee as a substitute if they had undertaken the relevant training. At a recent training session for Planning and Highways Committee Members 6 non Planning and Highways Committee Members had attended to form the initial pool of trained substitutes.

### ***Code of Conduct Training for the Standards Committee***

It was reported that it would be necessary to convene an additional meeting of the Committee to consider an application that had been received from an officer of the Council for exemption from the political restrictions that applied to his post. Training would be given to assist the Committee when considering the application. Following the appointment of additional Independent Members and Parish Councillor representatives further training would be provided later in the year.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted and that an additional meeting of this Committee be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November to consider the application referred to above.

### **20 North Turton Parish Councillors – Request for Dispensation**

A report setting out details of a request for a dispensation to participate in meetings in relation to the Barlow Institute Committee of Management from four Parish Councillors from North Turton Parish council was considered.

**RESOLVED:** That the application be approved and that the dispensation be granted for a period of four years from the date of this meeting.

### **21 Register of Interests Update**

A report was submitted on the level of personal interests recorded in the authority's Register of Interests maintained under Section 81(1) of the Local Government Act 2000.

The Register was inspected by the Committee during the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the current position be noted and that the Chair of the Committee and the Monitoring Officer be requested to prepare additional guidance for Members of the Council on completing their notifications and then write to all Members urging them to take action to ensure that their entry is up to date in the Register.

### **22 Communications**

#### ***Standards Board Bulletin: 40***

The newsletter was submitted for information.

#### ***Local Authorities Tackling Complaints About Members***

The Standards Board for England had reported that 164 authorities had received 360 cases in the opening period 8<sup>th</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008. 279 authorities had received no complaints.

***Case of Interest: Councillors Peter and Sheila Montague***

The case was submitted for information.

**23 Date of Next Meeting**

The next ordinary meeting would be held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

**24 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED** – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item in view of the fact that the business to be transacted is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 7 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**25 Update on the Investigation of Two Complaints Against Councillors**

An update was given

**RESOLVED** – That the update be noted.

Signed.....

Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were signed

Date.....