

STANDARDS COMMITTEE
Thursday 7th October 2010

PRESENT – *Councillors E Entwistle, J Hirst, Zamir Khan and Simon Huggill*

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS – *Councillor Malowana-Murphy and Councillor Stephen Simpson*

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE – *Mr L Loft (Chair), Mr B Kiernan, Mrs Sue Entwistle, Ms Harpreet Kaur-Kalkat, Mrs V Miles and Mrs V Webb*

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE- *Janie Berry (Legal Services) and Christine Wood, (Democratic Services).*

RESOLUTIONS

12 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular new Members Councillors Simon Huggill and former Standards Committee member Eileen Entwistle (replacing Councillors Karimeh Foster and Tony Melia). Apologies for absence were received from Mr Zahid Aziz.

The Chair referred to the commitment of Councillor Karimeh Foster on the Committee and in particular in her role as Vice Chair in recent years.

RESOLVED – That a letter be sent to Councillor Karimeh Foster expressing thanks for her commitment and hard work as a member of the Standards Committee.

13 Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on 22nd July 2010

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd July 2010 be approved and signed as a correct record.

14 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Simon Huggill declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 and remained in the meeting during discussion and decision on the item.

15 Matters arising

Ethical Government Website (Minute 6)

Janie Berry delivered a presentation demonstrating to Members, Blackburn with Darwen's Ethical Governance and the Standards Committee web page, which was now available on the Council's website. It was anticipated that the page would be launched in the near future.

The following headings were currently available on the page:

- Introduction from Laurence Loft, independent Chair of the Council's Standards Committee
- Our commitment to high ethical standards
- Membership of the Standards Committee
- Standards for England
- Complaints and compliments about Councillors
- Common questions
- Council codes and policies

A discussion took place in which it was highlighted that the web page promoted awareness of the Committee, and the work of upholding high values. It was also recognised that the page was a mechanism for receiving compliments and complaints in relation to Members of the Council.

RESOLVED – That the Ethical Government Website be launched.

Guidance from the Standards for England on Gifts and Hospitality (Minute 7)

The Committee was advised that Guidance from the Standards for England on Gifts and Hospitality, had been circulated all Members of Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Darwen Town Council and all Parish Councils.

Verbal Update on Recruitment (Minute 8)

In relation to the two current vacancies (one independent and one parish) on the Committee, Members were advised that final closure of Standards for England was anticipated to be between December 2011 and March 2012. The Committee was requested to consider recruitment to the two positions, due to the current circumstances.

RESOLVED – That recruitment to the two vacancies on the Standards Committee be postponed until formal clarification has been received on the future of Standards for England.

Standards Committee Annual Report (Minute 9)

The Committee was advised that the Standards Committee Annual Report 2009/10 had been forwarded to all Members of Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Darwen Town Council and all Parish Councils.

16 Decision by Standards for England

A report was submitted advising the Committee of the decision of the Standards for England in relation to a complaint about a (former) Executive Member of the Council, and of the subsequent recommendations of the Assessment Sub Committee.

RESOLVED – That advice in relation to register/declarations of interests be forwarded to all Members of Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

17 Standards for England Bulletin 48

Standards for England Bulletin 48 was submitted to the Committee for information.

18 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 6th January 2011.

Signed.....

Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were signed

Date.....