

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Thursday, 14th June, 2012

Mr J R Baggaley (Chair)

Councillors:

P.G. Barnes (a)
P.A. Hughes (a)
Mr D. Kotak
Mr G.D. Proctor (a)

F.J.D. Boot
Mr D. Evans
Mr G.T. Parkinson
Mr G. Wallis

Officers in Attendance: H. Barrington

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Councillor Barnes and Mr G.D. Proctor.

2 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 9TH OF FEBRUARY 2012.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

None.

Mr D. Evans arrived at the meeting.

4 CODE OF CONDUCT, ARRANGEMENTS AND SANCTIONS

Consideration was given to a report of the Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, which had previously been circulated, updating the Committee on the deliberations of Standards Committee Working Group C and asking Standards Committee to agree the draft Code of Conduct and arrangements for dealing with complaints for approval by Council. The Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that Regulations defining disclosable pecuniary interests had recently been issued, so that progress could now be made on drafting Parts 2 and 3 of the Code. The Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer also confirmed that a Commencement Order had been issued which brings the new regime into force with effect from 1 July 2012.

RESOLVED that:

1. The report be noted;
2. The Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer be requested to prepare a report to Council on behalf of the Standards Committee recommending to Council that it approves Part 1 of the Code of Conduct at Appendix 1 and, subject to the amendments agreed at the meeting, the arrangements at Appendix 2; and
3. the Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, in consultation with Working Group C, be authorised to prepare Parts 2 and 3 of the Code of Conduct for referral to Council for approval.

5 PARISHES, COMMITTEE AND INDEPENDENT PERSON

Consideration was given to a report of the Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, which had previously been circulated, updating the Standards Committee on the deliberations of Standards Committee Working Group A and asking Standards Committee to agree proposals to Council on the composition of the new Standards Committee and appointment of the Independent Person. The Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer also confirmed that transitional arrangements would now enable existing independent members of the Standards Committee to be appointed as an Independent Person.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer be requested to prepare a report to Council on behalf of the Standards Committee recommending to Council that:
 - a) it sets up a Standards Committee which is not politically balanced;
 - b) the Standards Committee consists of 2 representatives from each political group together with 3 co-opted non-voting Members (1 Independent and 2 Parish reps);
 - c) Sub-Committees of the Standards Committee (Hearings Panels) consisting of 1 representative from each political group and 1 co-opted non-voting Member will deal with decisions on allegations following an investigation;
 - d) subject to the amendments agreed at the meeting, it approves the

remit of the Standards Committee and Hearings Panels set out in Appendix 1; and

- e) it agrees to the appointment of 1 Independent Person with 1 reserve candidate and that the that the Independent Person is paid a fixed fee retainer of £500 per year to cover attendance at meetings and telephone calls with a fee of £100 per allegation which is subject to an investigation dealt with. It is proposed that the reserve Independent Person receives a fixed fee retainer of £250 per year with a fee of £100 per allegation which is subject to an investigation dealt with.
2. The Committee agree that the Recruitment pack at Appendix 2 be used to recruit the Independent Person and a reserve candidate.
 3. A recruitment panel comprising the 3 elected Members of the Standards Committee be set up to shortlist and interview candidates for the Independent Person and to make a recommendation to Council for appointment. The same Panel shall deal with the appointment of the co-opted members.

6 INTERESTS, DISPENSATIONS AND PREDETERMINATION

Consideration was given to a report of the Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, which had previously been circulated, updating the Standards Committee on the deliberations of Working Group B and authorising the Standards Committee and Monitoring Officer to deal with dispensations under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

RESOLVED that:

1. The report is noted; and
2. The Council Solicitor and Monitoring Officer be requested to prepare a report to Council on behalf of the Standards Committee recommending to Council that it delegates the power to grant dispensations-
 - a. on Grounds set out in Section 33(2)(a) and (d)of the Localism Act 2011 to the Monitoring Officer; and
 - b. on Grounds set out in Section 33 (2)(b), (c) and (e) of the Localism Act 2011 to the Standards Committee.