

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

15 October 2007

Attendance:

Mr P Smith (Independent Member - Chairman) (P)

Councillors:

Barratt (P)

Berry (P)

Chamberlain (P)

Lipscomb (P)

Nelmes (P)

Read

Independent Members and Parish Representatives in attendance

Ms J Collins (Independent Member)

Ms M McCormack (Independent Member)

Mrs S Peach (Independent Member)

Ms L Banister (Parish Representative)

Others in Attendance who did not address the meeting

Councillor Bell

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Read and Ms A Clear (Parish Representative) and Mr M Westwell (Parish Representative).

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 9 July 2007 be approved and adopted.

3. **REVIEW OF LOCAL PROTOCOLS**

(Report ST58 refers)

The Committee noted that, following adoption by the Council of the revised Code of Conduct (on 27 June 2007), it was necessary to amend a number of the Council's local Protocols, to ensure that the content in each case was consistent with the Code's new provisions.

Therefore, appended to the report were amended versions of the following local Protocols:-

- (a) Licensing & Regulation and Appeals & Disputes Committees.
- (b) Gifts and Hospitality.
- (c) Participation in the Consideration of Grant Aid Applications from Local Organisations.

With regard to the Planning Protocol, it was noted that an amended version would first be considered by Planning Development Control Committee Members and then referred to this Committee, at its meeting to be held on 3 December 2007.

RECOMMENDED:

1. THAT WITH REGARD TO THE PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS OF THE LICENSING & REGULATION AND APPEALS & DISPUTES COMMITTEES, THE AMENDED VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES ATTACHED AS APPENDIX A TO THE ABOVE REPORT, BE APPROVED.

2. THAT WITH REGARD TO THE PROTOCOL FOR THE RECEIPT OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY, THE AMENDED VERSION ATTACHED AS APPENDIX B(ii), BE APPROVED.

3. THAT WITH REGARD TO THE PROTOCOL FOR MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSIDERATION OF GRANT AID APPLICATIONS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS, THE AMENDED VERSION WITH TRACK CHANGES ATTACHED AS APPENDIX C TO THE ABOVE REPORT, BE APPROVED.

4. MONITORING OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS BY INDEPENDENT MEMBERS AND PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

(Report ST 59 refers)

RESOLVED:

1. That the Independent Members and Parish Representatives undertake an evaluation of selected committee meetings and full Council, to ascertain the level of compliance with the Code of Conduct and other guidance.

2. That the section of the External Auditors annual report relating to Ethics and Governance be submitted to the Committee for consideration at the appropriate time.

5. **STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND – BULLETIN 35**

(Report ST 60 refers)

The Committee noted with concern the potential workload implications regarding the filtering of all complaints by local authorities, as proposed by the Standards Board; the draft Regulations were still awaited. The Corporate Director (Governance) reported that a possible joint working initiative with other Hampshire authorities may help with more cost effective processing of the initial filtering work. Full hearings were likely to remain with the authority in whose area the complaints originated.

RESOLVED:

1. That the content of Bulletin 35 be received and noted.
2. That future editions of the Bulletin be submitted to the Committee for discussion.

6. **COST OF DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS**

(Oral Report)

The Corporate Director (Governance) reported that the current cost of dealing with the complaints considered at the last meeting was likely to be around £14,000, although the complainant was continuing to raise issues related to the handling of the cases.

The Committee then discussed, in general terms, the procedures available to both complainants and local authorities when dealing with such matters.

RESOLVED:

That the oral report of the Corporate Director (Governance) be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.15pm and concluded at 7.30pm

Chairman