

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

4 February 2008

STANDARDS BOARD BULLETIN 36 AND PROPOSED INCREASE IN SIZE OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR (GOVERNANCE)

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RECENT REFERENCES:

None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

From time to time, the Standards Board issues a bulletin containing information about recent developments related to probity and ethics. Members have considered past editions and found them to be of interest. Therefore, the most recent publication is attached.

Some of the topics featured in this edition relate to items elsewhere on the agenda and there is a particular timely reference on page four to the size of Standards Committees.

Later in the meeting, Members will be invited to recommend to Council a Parish Representative replacement for Mrs Angela Clear. Having regard to the likely increased Committee workload which will arise from the new duty of filtering and assessing all complaints, it would seem advisable to consider increasing the size of Committee, not least to ensure greater availability and choice for sub-committees.

Therefore, it is suggested that the number of Parish Representatives serving on the Committee be increased from three to four. There are already four Independent Members on the Committee which would appear adequate, but it would be useful to also increase the City Council representation by one, giving a proposed overall Committee size of 15 – i.e. seven City Councillors, four Independent Members and four Parish Representatives, which also maintains the ‘non Councillor’ majority.

If Members are agreeable to this approach, it would seem convenient to recommend the appointment of two Parish Representatives from the list of applicants appended to Report ST62, later in the agenda. That recommendation, together with the increase in the City Council membership, would need to be determined by full Council, which would also need to authorise the necessary changes to the Constitution. As the burden of additional work is unlikely to materialise until April 2008 at the earliest, the appointment of the additional City

Councillor could await the Annual Meeting of the Council on 14 May 2008, when all committee appointments are made for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

RECOMMENDATIONS (TO COUNCIL):

1. That, having regard to the likely future workload to be undertaken by the Standards Committee, the number of City Councillors and Parish Representatives be increased by one each, giving an overall Committee membership of 15 as follows:-  
  
City Councillors - 7  
  
Independent Members - 4  
  
Parish Representatives - 4
2. That, subject to the agreement of 1. above, the increase in Parish Representatives be immediate, but the increase in City Councillors be not introduced until the Annual Meeting of the Council on 14 May 2008.
3. That the Corporate Director (Governance) be authorised to make the necessary amendments to the Constitution.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

An Efficient and Effective Council.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Parish Representatives are eligible for an allowance of £252pa plus travelling and subsistence payments. Therefore, an additional representative would potentially generate a small increase in costs. The only increased cost in respect of the additional City Councillor would be travelling and subsistence.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDIX:

Standards Board Bulletin 36