

Draft Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held on Monday 23 July 2007 at the Council Offices, Monkton Park, Chippenham

Independent Members: Mr R Philpott

Parish/Town Council Representatives: Councillor G Yates

District Councillors: Councillors C Boase, M Groom, R Sanderson and J Scragg

Officers: P Jeremiah (Legal Team Leader), J Tavener (Customer Contact Team Leader) and M Todd (Senior Policy and Democratic Services Officer).

ST1. Election of Chairman

The Committee considered the election of a Chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year.

Resolved that Mr R. Philpott be appointed Chairman of the Standards Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

ST2. Election of Vice-Chairman

The Committee considered the election of a Vice Chairman for the ensuing Municipal Year.

Resolved that Mr J Carine be appointed Vice Chairman of the Standards Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

ST3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Carine.

ST4. Public Question Time/Receipt of Petitions

No public questions or petitions were received.

ST5. Minutes

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2007.

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 23 April 2007 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

ST6. Chairman's Announcements

Vacancies on the Standards Committee

It was noted that a new Town Council representative would be appointed in time for the next meeting in October. The Council had also agreed that a third independent



Member should be appointed to the Committee, however, this had been put on hold pending the decision on unitary status which was expected imminently.

ST7. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

ST8. Comments and Complaints Update

Consideration was given to Report No. 8, circulated with the Agenda, informing the Standards Committee of the number of comments and complaints received by service area for the 2006/07 financial year. The report also provided an update in respect of the implementation of the new comments and complaints system.

Resolved that the report be noted.

ST9. Registration of Interests

Consideration was given to Report No. 9, circulated with the Agenda. The report gave an update on the registration of members' interests following the local elections on 3 May 2007. All District Councillors had registered their interests but some Parish Councillors had yet to do so.

It was noted that all registrations of interest should be effected within 28 days of the member taking office. Any member refusing to register their interests would be in breach of the Code of Conduct which could be reported to the Standards Board.

Resolved that:

- (1) The Monitoring Officer contact all those members who have not yet registered their interests to remind them of their obligation to do so under the Code.
- (2) An update report be brought to the next meeting of the Committee in October.

ST10. Members' Code of Conduct – Training

Consideration was given to Report No. 10, circulated with the Agenda. The report outlined proposals to provide training on the Members' Code of Conduct.

The Monitoring Officer had spoken to new Members of the District Council about the Code of Conduct as part of their induction programme following the May elections. It was noted that there was sufficient funding in the training budget to cover the proposals.

Resolved that the Committee endorses the following training proposals:

- (a) Further training be offered to Parish Councillors in a series of meetings to be held immediately prior to the Area Committee meetings programmed for September/October. The

meetings will also be open to any District Councillors who wish to attend.

- (b) Once the legislation is in place to require all allegations of breaches of the Code to be made directly to the District Council, specialist training be provided for the Committee to enable them to carry out their new role in dealing with such allegations.
- (c) The Monitoring Officer attend Service Area meetings later in the year to outline and explain to Officers the more important aspects of the Code.

ST11. Parish Council Dispensations

Consideration was given to Report No. 11, circulated with the Agenda, asking the Committee to consider three requests for the renewal of dispensations granted to Parish Council.

An additional request had also been received since the circulation of the Agenda and the Chairman certified that this should be considered as an urgent item to enable Kington St Michael Parish Council to consider items relating to the village shop without delay.

Resolved that:

- (1) The Committee grants dispensations to the following Parish Councils for a period of four years from the date of this meeting:
 - Wootton Bassett Town Council in respect of matters relating to the Wootton Bassett Town Trust.
 - Langley Burrell Parish Council in respect of matters relating to the Village Hall.
 - Hullavington Parish Council in respect of matters relating to the Village Hall and Hullavington Cemetary.
 - Kington St Michael Parish Council in respect of matters relating to the Kington St Michael Village Shop Limited.
- (2) The Monitoring Officer write to all Parish Councils reminding them of the legal requirements relating to dispensations.

ST12. Dispensation Sub-Committee

Consideration was given to Report No. 12, circulated with the Agenda, determining the procedure for dealing with applications for dispensations.

Resolved that:

- (1) A Sub Committee be set up to consider applications for dispensations.
- (2) The Sub Committee should consist of three Members, one District Councillor, one Town or Parish Councillor and one Independent Member.
- (3) The Monitoring Officer be given delegated authority to determine the membership of the Sub Committee based on the availability of Members.

ST13. Work Programme for 2007/08

Consideration was given to Report No. 13, circulated with the Agenda, setting out a work programme for the Standards Committee for the forthcoming year.

Resolved that the proposed work programme for 2007/08 set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.

ST14. Notes of Independent Forum Meeting

The Committee received the notes of the Independent Forum Meeting held on 20 April 2007.

ST15. Standards Board Bulletins – May and July 2007

The Committee received the Standard Board Bulletins for May and July 2007.

The meeting started at 7.00pm and concluded at 7.40pm.

No members of the public were present.