

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

—Minutes—

21 JANUARY 2008

Members Present:

Mr. Steven Moussavi (Chairman)
Councillor Nicholas Botterill
Councillor Donald Johnson
Councillor Lisa Homan

Officers in attendance:

Lesley Courcoff, Assistant Chief Executive
Kayode Adewumi, Head of Councillors' Services
David Bays, Committee Co-ordinator

ITEM		ACTION
Item 1	<u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 2007</u>	
	<u>RESOLVED</u> - That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2007 be agreed and signed as an accurate record.	ACE/KA/DB to note
Item 2	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>	
	Apologies for absence were received from Ms Grace Moody-Stuart, Independent Member, and Michael Cogher, Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer.	ACE/KA/DB to note
Item 3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest made by members at this meeting of the Committee.	
Item 4	<u>THE CODE OF CONDUCT – DVD</u>	
	Members watched a DVD on the new Code of Conduct – entitled “The Code Uncovered”, produced for the Standards Board for England. They supported its use as part of continuing	

training for Members. It was also suggested that Michael Cogher, Head of Legal Services, might attend the first meeting of the Planning Applications Committee after the new provisions had come into force to run a training session for them.

RESOLVED

That all Members be encouraged to view the DVD through a briefing session at suitable Group meetings. **ACE**

Item 5 **STANDARDS COMMITTEE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEMBERS – THE NEW CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Committee noted that, following the last meeting, the questionnaire discussed then had been circulated to all elected members, independent Members and co-opted Members. The questionnaire was posted out with reply paid envelopes and 24 replies had been received by the time of the meeting.

The results highlighted several areas on which future training in the Code should be focused, mainly around personal and prejudicial interests; the register of interests; the function of the Standards Committee; and penalties for breaching the Code.

RESOLVED: That the results be used as part of the basis of training for Members in the future.

HLS

Item 6 **ASSESSING COMPLAINTS - THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT – UPDATE**

The Committee received a report updating them on the provisions of the 2007 Act, drawing on information presented at the North West London Boroughs networking Event on 6 December 2007 at Brent Town Hall and outlining the timetable for advertising for a new Member of the Committee to help it take on its new role under the Act.

The Committee noted that the networking event had rehearsed some suggested mechanisms for dealing with complaints but that more specific guidance from the Standards Board for England and regulations were expected shortly.

Meanwhile, an advertisement had been placed in H&F News as well as on the Council website seeking applications for an additional Independent Member on the Committee to deal with the potential extra work involved. 5 expressions of interest had been received to date. It was anticipated that interviews would be held in March or April with a view to a name being recommended to the Council at its Annual meeting on 28 May.

ACE (KA/DB)

RESOLVED That the report be noted.

Item 7 **CONSULTATION PAPER: ORDERS & REGULATIONS RELATING TO CODE OF CONDUCT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS**

The Committee considered the Government's consultation paper on the orders and regulations required to amend the Ethical Framework under the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2008.

The consultation paper requested replies to specific questions on which the Department for Communities and Local Government would welcome views. The questions were set out in the report together with some suggested answers drafted by the Head of Legal Services. The Committee also had comments on the paper referred to it from Cllr Aherne.

RESOLVED: That the Committee support the suggested answers submitted by the Head of Legal Services as the basis of its response to the DCLG.

HLS

Item 8 **STANDARDS COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee noted its proposed future work programme.

DB

Item **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
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None.

Meeting began : 7:00 pm

Meeting ended : 8:30 pm

CHAIR.....