

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

—Minutes—

2 JUNE 2008

Members Present:

Mr. Christopher Troke (Chairman)
Mrs. Joyce Epstein
Mr. Steven Moussavi
Ms Grace Moody-Stuart
Miss Oluchi Onwere
Councillor Adronie Alford
Councillor Nicholas Botterill
Councillor Stephen Cowan
Councillor Lisa Homan

Officers in attendance:

Kayode Adewumi, Head of Councillors' Services
Michael Cogher, Head of Legal Services
David Bays, Committee Co-ordinator

ITEM

ACTION

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED – That Mr. Christopher Troke be appointed
Chairman for the Municipal Year 2008-09

**2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS
COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 APRIL 2008**

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 April
2008 be agreed and signed as an accurate record.

KA/DB to note

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Donald Johnson.

**ACE/KA/DB to
note**

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by members at this meeting of the Committee.

4 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee noted their Terms of Reference as agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 28 May 2008, and welcomed the two new independent Members, Mrs. Joyce Epstein and Miss Oluchi Onwere.

5 SBE BULLETIN 38

The Committee noted the contents of the latest Bulletin from the Standards Board for England. Most of the items in the Bulletin were the subject of a report elsewhere on the agenda. In response to a question, Michael Cogher confirmed that he was now the Council's Monitoring Officer, following the recent departure of Lesley Courcouf, Assistant Chief Executive. The Committee offered their best wishes for the future to Lesley Courcouf.

6

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN
HEALTH ACT 2007**

Michael Cogher introduced the report, highlighting the need for separate sub-Committees for each stage of the complaints process and outlining options for either a fixed membership or a more flexible approach. The Committee agreed the Sub-Committees should be organised on a flexible basis, depending on the availability of Members and with aim of sharing the work involved as far as possible.

It was noted that one valid complaint had been received so an Assessment Sub-Committee would be needed to be convened shortly.

RESOLVED :

1. That the Standards Committee establish the following sub-committees:-
 - An Assessment Sub-Committee
 - A Review Sub-Committee
 - A Hearing Sub-Committee
2. That the Committee make appropriate appointments and substitute arrangements in respect of the above Sub-Committees, based on a flexible membership drawn from the total pool of 9 Members, providing that the Chairman in each is an Independent Member.
3. That the terms of reference set out in Appendix 1 be adopted in respect of each Sub-Committee.
4. That the Assessment Criteria set out in Appendix 2 be adopted.
5. That the Monitoring Officer prepare a pre-assessment report in relation to all complaints considered by the Assessment Sub-Committee.
6. That these arrangements be kept under review by the Monitoring Officer and further reports presented to the Committee as required.

7 PUBLICITY FOR NEW ARRANGEMENTS

The report outlined proposals for the required notice to be placed in the June edition of H&F News, to be followed by a news article in July; an update of the Council's website to inform visitors to the site how to complain; and for notices to be placed in local libraries and Hammersmith and Fulham Town Hall receptions.

DB

RESOLVED That the various proposals set out above, and outlined in full in paragraph 2 of the report, be noted

8 WORK PROGRAMME.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted and agreed.

ALL

9 ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF STANDARDS COMMITTEES

That the committee agree that Michael Cogher and Joyce Epstein attend the Annual Assembly in Birmingham on 13-14 October 2008.

DB

10 LOCAL ASSESSMENT TRAINING

Members adjourned into 2 groups to consider 4 Standards Board for England case studies of complaints against Members, resuming to discuss their conclusions.

Case C concerned alleged disparaging e-mails to the Council's IT staff, a possible conflict of interest and a hectoring and overbearing manner towards technical officers

Case D alleged that there were irregularities involving 3 councillors in the way a proposed development had been processed, including a possible failure to declare a prejudicial interest

Case E related to a visit by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council and parishioner's letter to 7 councillors outlining the allegations

Case J was about a member of staff who worked as a registrar in the county registration office and a draft lease for the Town Hall and whether there was a conflict of interest as the councillor concerned was a member of the Working Party drawing up the draft lease.

Meeting began : 7:00 pm

Meeting ended : 8.30 pm

- Standards Committee -

CHAIRMAN.....