

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 20 April 2005 at 6.00 p.m.

at the Council House, Walsall

Present

Mr. R. Meller (Chairman)
Mr. L. Bates (Vice-Chairman)
Mr. M. Hodgson
Councillor Khan
Councillor O'Hare
Councillor Underhill
Mr. R. Taylor

148/05 Changes of membership

There were no changes in membership for this meeting.

149/05 Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillor Bentley, Ms. McLeod and Mrs. Parsons.

150/05 Minutes

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2005, a copy having been circulated previously to each Member of the Committee, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

151/05 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest submitted for this meeting.

152/05 **Late item - Review of the Code of Conduct for Members**

The Chairman advised the meeting that a late item report on the review of the Code of Conduct for Members had been prepared by the Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer for consideration at this meeting and it would be considered as the last item of business on the agenda.

The reason for urgency - this was the last meeting of the Committee in the municipal year and members needed to make a decision to hold a special meeting in order that the Committee had time to formulate a response to the consultation document on the review on the Members Code of Conduct.

153/05 **Fourth annual assembly of Standards Committee**

The report of the Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (2) That Mrs. S.F. Parsons, together with Mr. R. Taylor be nominated to attend the fourth annual assembly of Standards Committees in Birmingham on 5 and 6 September 2005, in accordance with the agreed system of rotation and if for any reason either of the above members cannot attend, the matter be re-considered and that a substitution be made in accordance with the agreed system of rotation.

154/05 **Standards Committee training – 12 May 2005**

The report of the Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer was submitted:

(see annexed)

The Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer advised members that the training arranged for Thursday 12 May 2005. in respect of cases referred back by the Standards Board for England for local determination involving an allegation that a member had breached the Code of Conduct, would take the form of a workshop.

Resolved

That the contents of the report be noted.

155/04 **Standards Board for England – roadshows 2005**

The report of the Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Members were advised that the purpose of the report was to seek nominations for three members of the Committee to attend the Standards Board for England roadshow on 9 June 2005. Mr. Meller, Mr. Bates and Councillor Underhill expressed an interest attending the roadshow.

Following further discussion the view was expressed that all members should be advised of the arrangements for the roadshow and given the opportunity to attend and that the criteria used for the attendance of members at the roadshow be the same as that used to determine which three members should attend the annual assembly of the Standards Committee

Resolved

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officers be requested to write to all members of the Committee advising them of the arrangements for the Standards Board for England roadshow on 9 June 2005 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Birmingham, and request that members indicate whether they are available to attend.
- (2) That once replies have been received, a criteria similar to that used to determine which members attend the annual assembly of Standards Committee be used so that a fair and transparent system is used to determine member attendance at this and future roadshows.

156/04 **Late item – Review of the Code of Conduct for Members**

The report of the Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Resolved

- (1) That a special meeting of the Committee be held over two nights in early June 2005 at which the consultation documents on the review of the Members Code of Conduct will be considered in detail and an appropriate response prepared;
- (2) That approval be given to invite all elected members to the above special meeting in order that they have an opportunity to participate in the consultation exercise on the review of the Members Code of Conduct;

- (3) That co-opted members on the various Council Committees be advised of the consultation documents and be requested to forward any comments they have on them for consideration at the special meeting of the Standards Committee referred to at (1) above;
- (4) That the Assistant Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer be requested to write to members of the Standards Committee to establish a date in early June when it is convenient for the majority of members to attend the special meeting referred to at (1) above.

The meeting terminated at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: