

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

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### MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2010 AT COMMITTEE ROOM III, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

#### Present:

##### Wiltshire Council Members

Cllr Ernie Clark, Cllr Peter Fuller and Cllr Malcolm Hewson

##### Town/Parish Council Co-opted Members

Mr William Bailey, Mr Paul Neale, Mr Robert Oglesby JP, Mr John Scragg, Miss Pam Turner, Mr Keith Wallace and His Hon David MacLaren Webster QC

##### Independent co-opted Members

Mr Michael Cronin, Mr Philip Gill MBE JP, Mrs Isabel McCord (Chairman), Mr Ian McGill CBE and Mr Gerry Robson OBE (Vice-Chair)

#### Also Present:

Cllr Francis Morland

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#### 89. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs Jane Bayley, Councillor Nigel Carter, Councillor Julian Johnson, Mr Craig McCallum, Councillor Ian McLennan and Mr Stuart Middleton

#### 90. Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the meetings held on 22 September and 26 October were presented.

#### **Resolved:**

**To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes**

91. **Chairman's announcements**

**Localism Bill**

The Chairman announced that the publication of the Localism Bill had been delayed until 8 December.

**Dates of Future Meetings**

These were listed on the Committee's Forward plan.

**Mentoring Training**

The Chairman had recently attended the Mentoring training organised by the Councillor Development Group. She requested those who were due to attend the next session to send feedback on the course to Democratic Services.

**Mr William Bailey**

The Chairman congratulated Mr Bailey in his success in the recent NALC awards where he was placed in second place in the Councillor of the Year category.

92. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest

93. **Public participation**

There were no members of the public present

94. **Minutes of Sub Committees**

The minutes of the Dispensation sub-committee held on 21 October were presented.

**Resolved:**

**To note the minutes**

95. **Outcome of a Consideration Sub-Committee**

The committee considered a report on the outcome of a Consideration sub-committee.

**Resolved:**

**To note the report**

96. **Code of Conduct Determination Hearings**

96.1 **Determination Hearing**

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report and explained the background to the complaint. He added that training had been arranged for Councillor Ludlow and also for the Parish Council and this would take place in the near future.

**Resolved**

**To note the outcome of the Hearing**

96.2 **Determination Hearing**

The Chairman gave a verbal update on the outcome of a Standards Hearing sub-committee. She outlined the reasons for hearing 2 complaints together and the process involved. She also outlined lessons learnt from this hearing which included the importance of the Assessment sub-committee being clear about which aspects of the case the Investigating Officer should address.

**Resolved**

**To note the outcome of the Hearing**

97. **Review of Constitution**

The Chairman introduced the report which advised members of the decision of the council on the review of the constitution following the detailed work carried out by the Focus Group on the Review of the Constitution.

The Chairman added that the Focus Group would continue to meet with the membership remaining unchanged.

**Resolved:**

**To note the report**

98. **Report of the Task and Finish Group on Presentation to Area Boards**

Mr Gerry Robson OBE reported that as the Localism Bill had been deferred the presentation to Area Boards would not take place until after 8 December.

99. **Status Report on Complaints made under the Code of Conduct**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented the report and outlined how the caseload was being managed. She explained the usefulness of the investigators findings of fact being set out in the hearing sub-committee report and said that this would be trialled at the next hearing sub-committee with feedback given at the next meeting of this committee.

**Resolved**

- a. **That the report be noted.**
- b. **That feedback on the use of detailing findings of fact in the investigation report be brought back to the next meeting.**

100. **Review the allowances for standards committee members**

The Chairman asked for the committee's views on the proposed allowance rise that was due in May 2011. After a debate it was

**Resolved:**

**To ask the Monitoring Officer to investigate, and bring a report to the next meeting, on the possibility of freezing co-optees allowances at their present level.**

101. **Size and Composition of the Standards Committee**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced the report which recommended recommend a reduction in the size of the Standards Committee from 22 to 14 members by April 2011.

A debate ensued during which it was

**Resolved:**

**To defer the decision in the light of the imminent publication of the Localism Bill and to bring a report to the next meeting of the committee**

102. **Procedures Surrounding Register of Interest Submissions**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced the report which updated the committee on the work that has been undertaken by the Governance Team

since 1 April 2009 in respect of the Registers of Members' Interests for town and parish councils.

It was requested that advice be also given to Wiltshire Councillors on the importance of being specific in their Registers of Members' Interests.

**Resolved**

**To note the report**

103. **Forward Plan**

The committee's forward workplan was presented.

**Resolved**

**To note the forward workplan.**

104. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items

(Duration of meeting: 4.00 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Pam Denton, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718371, e-mail [pam.denton@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:pam.denton@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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