

WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the:	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
Held on:	WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH 2005
Held in:	OCTAGON SUITE, BRADLEY ROAD TROWBRIDGE
Present:	
District Council Representatives:	Sophie Farkas and Russell Hawker
External Representatives:	Tony Frost (Chair), Margaret Ellwood and Keith West (Vice Chair)
Town/Parish Representatives:	Mary Stacey
Also Present	Marion Clegg, Francis Morland, Community Initiatives Manager and Environmental Health Officer (JM)
Officers:	Corporate Director (PW), Legal & Democratic Services Manager and Member Support Officer (MS)

117. APOLOGIES AND CHANGES OF MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Cllr Clark, Manasseh and Prickett

118. MINUTES

The revised draft minutes, from the meeting on 26 January 2005, were presented to the Committee. These were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

119. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received

120. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman asked that for future meetings all relevant paperwork is distributed prior to the date of the meeting so that the Committee has time to digest all material. He stated that this was not a criticism and appreciated the pressures and workload of the Legal and Democratic Services Manager.

The Chairman announced that Francis Morland had asked to address the Committee and he would be allowing him to do so, as stipulated within the Constitution.

121. OPEN FORUM

Open Forum Speaker:

Mr Francis Morland –

- Agenda Item 6 – Standards Board For England – Complaints Update
- Revised draft minute 115 of 26 January 2005
- West Wiltshire District Council Complaints Procedure
- West Wiltshire District Council compliance with the Freedom of Information Act

122. CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW GROUP - UPDATE

Peter Woodcock explained the changes which had been identified and discussed at previous Constitutional Review Group meetings. A report was presented to Council on 23 February listing some changes proposed to the Constitution. Council have referred the proposed changes to the Standards Committee for discussion and recommendation.

Peter Woodcock explained the various needs for each of the amendments to the Constitution and sought the view of the Standards Committee. Most amendments proposed are minor changes or procedural changes.

The Committee agreed to defer discussion of proposed changes to section 9 until the following Standards Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the detailed drafting for the following amendments be brought to the next meeting of the Standards Committee for consideration for inclusion in the Constitution and if approved then referred to Full Council for adoption:

(i) **Section 2.3.2 – Adopting and Changing the Constitution**
Add sections 15 (LJCC) and 23 (Members’ Allowances).
Removal of section 17 (Officers)

(ii) **Section 2.3.3 - Adopting and Changing the Constitution**

Prior to the list of sections add –

The following parts of the Constitution can be changed by the Monitoring Officer, however only with prior approval of the Chairman of Standards Committee or the Chairman of the Overview Committee and only to reflect changes that occur from time to time or improve the information and guidance

Add sections 17 (Officers), 24 (Councillors and Members) and 25 (Working Guidelines)

At the end of the listed sections add

‘ “ However, any significant changes that have not been authorised (for example by legislation, changes in statutory guidance, or changes to the Constitution under other parts of this section) or made under delegated authority have to be agreed by Council ” ’

(iii) **2.3.4 – Working Guidelines**

This section be removed and replaced with a new section 2.3.4 to read –

‘ “ The Cabinet Scheme of Delegation may be amended at the discretion of the Leader from time to time. ” ’

(iv) **Discussion of section 9 and any other areas of the Constitution to be considered for amendment be deferred until 27 April 2005.**

123. STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND – COMPLAINTS UPDATE

The Legal and Democratic Services Manager informed the Committee that the Standards Board for England had not received any new complaints and there was no progress to report of the outstanding complaints.

124. NOTICE OF MOTION – STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE

The Legal and Democratic Services Manager explained that the notice of motion had gone to Council on 23 February 2005 and been referred to the Standards Committee for comment. The Standards Board for England have been consulting on a policy for Standards in Public Life and it is likely that when this notice of motion was devised the Standards Board for England had not announced this.

RESOLVED:

- (i) Notice of Motion be noted**
- (ii) Members be encouraged to make any comments on this matter be made before 17 June 2005**

125. WORK PROGRAMME

The Forward Work Plan was considered. Suggestions were made to include guidelines for enquiries and a separate agenda item to discuss dispensation.

RESOLVED:

That revisions to the work plan be made and the work plan be noted.

126. MOCK LOCAL DETERMINATION

The Committee took part in a mock local determination.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting will be held on Wednesday 27 April 2005 at 7pm in the 8trium at the Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge

(7.00pm – 9.54pm)

These minutes were prepared by Melanie Stimpson; Member Support Officer who can be contacted on 01225 770322 or email mstimpson@westwiltshire.gov.uk.