

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

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MINUTES of a MEETING of the STANDARDS COMMITTEE held at COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE on WEDNESDAY 14 JUNE 2006.

PRESENT:

Mr M Hewson, Mr P Lefever, Mr P McGuigan, Ms C O'Sullivan, Mrs P Rugg and Mr K Shipman.

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20. **Election of Chairman**

*Resolved: To appoint Mr P McGuigan as Chairman for the forthcoming year.*

21. **Election of Vice Chairman**

*Resolved: To appoint Ms C O'Sullivan as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year.*

22. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

*Resolved: To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2006.*

23. **Matter Arising from the Minutes** The Chairman advised members that the report requested at the last meeting regarding terms of reference would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee. It would first be considered by the Cabinet.

24. **Chairman's Announcements**

(a) Keith Shipman

The Chairman welcomed Mr Keith Shipman, the newly appointed independent member, to the meeting.

(b) Corporate Complaint

The Chairman informed members that officers were currently trying to arrange a suitable date to hear a corporate complaint.

He suggested meeting on Wednesday 26 July 2006 if this was suitable for the complainant.

25. **Presentation on the Overview and Scrutiny Function within the County Council** The Committee received a presentation from Mr Jeff Osborn, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Mr Paul Kelly, Scrutiny Manager. The presentation included the following issues:

- Background to the Overview and Scrutiny Function
- Call-in procedure
- Role of Task Groups
- Role of the Centre for Public Scrutiny
- The declaration of Members' interests in relation to scrutiny reviews
- Working with the forward plan and delegated decision making
- The role of Cabinet Advisory Panels
- Member requests for scrutiny reviews
- Resources for the scrutiny function
- Monitoring the implementation of Scrutiny recommendations

Members thanked Mr Osborn and Mr Kelly for the informative presentation and agreed that some of the issues raised should be discussed in more detail.

***Resolved:** To give further consideration to the following matters as part of the Committee's oversight of the Constitution:*

- *The relationship between the Cabinet Advisory Panels and the Scrutiny Committees and the potential for duplication.*
- *The adequacy of the five-day timescale laid down for the call-in process.*
- *Clarification of the rules for the declaration of Members' interests in relation to Scrutiny Reviews.*
- *Member and Officer capacity available for the Scrutiny process.*

26. **Independent Members' Forum – 21 April 2006** Members received a report on the last meeting of the Independent Members' Forum which had been held in Bracknell on 21 April 2006.

There had been some suggestion that the membership of Standards Committees should increase to enable them to deal more effectively with their increased responsibilities in relation to the determination of complaints referred by the Ethical Standards Officer. It had also been suggested that the introduction of reciprocal arrangements between authorities could be helpful when dealing with such complaints.

The Monitoring Officer stated that once the draft legislation had been issued the County Council could consider all the options and decide procedure for dealing with these complaints.

27. **Standards Board Update** The Committee noted the May 2006 Standards Board Bulletin.

Resolved:

- (1) *To agree that the Monitoring Officer should provide an information and guidance pack for Standards Committee members to assist them with their duties regarding complaints delegated by the Ethical Standards Officer.*
  - (2) *To view the DVD produced by the Standards Board entitled "Going Local: Investigations and Hearings" at the next meeting.*
28. **Standards Board Case Alert** The Committee noted the latest Case Alert from the Standards Board for England.
29. **Date of Next Meeting** To note that the next meeting will take place on Wednesday 4 October 2006 and to confirm the time in due course.

(Duration of meeting: 2.30pm – 4.40pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Marie Todd, of Democratic & Members' Services, direct line (01225) 713011, e-mail [marietodd@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:marietodd@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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