

WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the: Standards Committee

Held on: Thursday 17 July 2008

Held in: The Council Chamber, Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge

Present:

District Council Members: Cllrs Carbin, Clark, Martindale and Ridout

Independent Members: Tony Frost (Chairman), Bruce Epsley, Dennis Johnson and Gerry Robson

Town/Parish Members: Cllrs Oglesby and Wyett

Also present: Monitoring Officer (TD), Solicitor (SMS) and Member Support Officer (PD)

8. Apologies

None

9. Declarations of Interest

None.

10. Announcements from the Chairman

The Chairman said that a letter had been received from the Standards Board regarding awards to be made to Standards Committees.

The Standards Board for England is supporting the Standards and Ethics award category at the 2009 LGC Awards.

The judges will be looking for an authority, of any size or status, which has a dynamic and innovative approach to improving and promoting standards of member conduct. They will also want to see evidence of how the winning authority's commitment to promoting ethical standards has improved public confidence in local democracy.

The Chairman said that the Monitoring Officer would circulate details to members of the committee.

11. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2008 were approved as a correct record by the Committee, but with the following addition to the apologies (item 1): Cllr Martindale.

They were signed by the Chairman.

12. Procedure for Local Assessment and review

The Monitoring Officer introduced his report which included the amendments that had been requested at the last meeting on 25 June 2008.

The report was approved subject to an amendment to paragraph 3.2 which should read as follows:

"The intention being that, where both the member and complainant would be prepared to accept a decision of "any other action", the Assessment Sub-Committee is able to take that in to account when making their decision."

RESOLVED:

To approve and adopt the procedure for the assessment and review of complaints as amended.

13. Local Assessment Criteria

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report which on local assessment criteria. This was a 'checklist' of items to take into account when assessing complaints and deciding on which action to take.

The procedure will be published and made public once it has been agreed by this Committee.

The procedure was agreed subject to two minor amendments to item 6 on the last page of the criteria. The item to now read:

'The matter appears to be malicious, politically motivated or tit for tat.'

RESOLVED:

To approve and adopt the assessment criteria as amended.

14. Planning for Standards in the Wiltshire Unitary Authority

Gerry Robson presented a page from the Wiltshire County Council website which outlined the terms of reference of the current County Council Standards Committee. This could provide a basis for considering how the Standards Committee of the new Wiltshire Council might operate.

The Chairman suggested that members consider the paper and send their comments and suggestions to the Monitoring Officer who would bring them together for discussion at the next meeting on 4 September 2008.

7.00 – 7.45pm

These minutes were prepared by Pam Denton, Member Support Officer,
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