

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 MARCH 2012 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, MONKTON PARK, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 1ER.

Present:

Wiltshire Council Members

Cllr Nigel Carter, Cllr Ernie Clark, Cllr Peter Fuller, Cllr Julian Johnson, Cllr Howard Marshall and Cllr Ian McLennan

Town/Parish Council Co-opted Members

Mr William Bailey, Mr Paul Neale, Mr Robert Oglesby JP, Mr John Scragg, Miss Pam Turner and Mr Keith Wallace

Independent co-opted Members

Mrs Jane Bayley, Mr Michael Cronin, Mr Philip Gill MBE JP, Mrs Isabel McCord (Chairman), Mr Stuart Middleton and Mr Gerry Robson OBE (Vice Chairman)

Also in attendance

Cllr Francis Morland

13. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Craig McCallum and His Hon David MacLaren Webster QC.

14. Minutes of previous meeting

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank members of the committee for their valuable input on contract regulations which was submitted to the Head of Procurement.

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2012 were presented.

Resolved:

To approve the minutes as a correct record.

15. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

16. Chairman's announcements

The Chairman detailed the content of the two forthcoming meetings.

- 18 April 2012, Monkton Park Council Chamber 2pm
To discuss the Overview and Scrutiny review outcomes, Standards Annual Report and the Scheme of Delegation.
- 2 May 2012, Monkton Park Council Chamber 2pm
To discuss proposals for the new Standards Regime and the transitional arrangements.

17. Public Participation and Questions from Committee Members.

There were no members of the public present.

18. Recommendations of the Focus Group on the Review of the Constitution

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report, which updated the Committee on the developments since the previous meeting with input from the Constitution Focus Group and members of the Standards Task and Finish Group on the new Standards Framework.

After a lengthy discussion Members made changes to the recommendations contained within the report and to the wording of the draft Terms of Reference, Arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints under the Localism Act 2011, and Job Description and Person Specification. It was agreed that fine-tuning of the wording should be delegated to the Task and Finish Group with the revised version of each document being brought back to the Committee for final approval before onward recommendation to Council on 15 May.

Resolved

To recommend Council as follows:

(1) To establish a standards committee in accordance with the terms of reference at appendix 1, subject to further revision by the Standards Task

and Finish Group to reflect the Committee's wishes.

(2) To adopt the arrangements for dealing with code of conduct complaints as set out in appendices 2 and 3, subject to further revision by the Standards Task and Finish Group to reflect the Committee's wishes.

(3) To approve the job description and person specification for the independent person as set out in Appendix 4, subject to further revision by the Standards Task and Finish Group to reflect the Committee's wishes.

(4) To authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the chairman of the new standards committee and/or the Chairman of the existing Standards Committee, to take the necessary steps to secure the appointment of 2 independent persons and one reserve by the Council.

(5) To agree an appropriate rate of remuneration for the independent person, having regard to arrangements being made by other authorities and the advice of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

(6) Pending the issue of the regulations on interests and the emergence of any national template code of conduct, to use the existing code of conduct as the basis for a new code of conduct, amended as necessary to meet the requirements of the new legislation.

(7) To support parish, town and city councils in Wiltshire in preparing for the new standards framework and to consult them as far as possible on the proposed arrangements for Wiltshire Council.

19. Review of the Standards Committee Plan 2010 - 2014

The Committee reviewed the Standards Committee Plan 2010 – 2014. It was noted that there had been no change to the Standards Committee's Goals, Output or Targets. All developments were annotated within the comments column.

The Monitoring Officer explained that the arrangements for dealing with existing complaints after implementation of the new standards framework on 1 July 2012 will be subject to transitional regulations, which are awaited.

Resolved

To note the Plan.

20. Status Report on Complaints made under the Code of Conduct

The Monitoring Officer presented the report. The challenging workload was noted. Members conveyed their thanks for the useful breakdown of the case data.

Resolved

To note the report.

21. Minutes of Sub-Committees

The minutes of the Dispensation Sub-Committee held on 19 January 2012 were presented.

Resolved:

To note the minutes.

22. Forward Plan

The forward plan was presented.

Resolved

To approve the forward plan as amended.

23. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 2.15 - 4.25 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Anna Thurman, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718379, e-mail anna.thurman@wiltshire.gov.uk

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