

Standards Committee

A meeting of Standards Committee was held on Friday, 4th July, 2008.

Present: Mr F W Hayes (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Lynne Apedaile, Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Ken Dixon; Mr C.V Algie (Parish Representative), Mr T Bowman (Parish Representative), Mrs F Robinson (Independent)

Officers: D E Bond, J Nertney, A Squires, S Johnson (LD)

Also in attendance: Cllr John Fletcher

Apologies: Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Ken Lupton, Mrs E Chapman (Independent)

S **Declarations of Interest**

42/08

There were no declarations of interest.

S **Summary of Allegations of Misconduct determined by the Standards Board for England and Cases referred for Local Investigation**

43/08

The Committee considered a report that provided details of misconduct allegations regarding Members of Councils within the Stockton Borough area, which had been dealt with by the Standards Board and the Standards Committee during the first quarter of 2008/09.

During the period 1 April 2008 to 30 June 2008 two allegations against councillors had been determined by the Standards Board. The Committee were provided with the details of the two allegations.

The Committee was informed that no allegations had been determined locally during the first quarter.

It was explained that there were currently two allegations being investigated locally following referrals from Ethical Standards Officers.

Local assessment arrangements had come into force on 8 May and details of any complaints received and considered by the Assessment Sub-Committee during the quarter would be reported to the Standards Board by no later than 14 July, and thereafter to the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

S **Ethical Standards - Case Studies**

44/08

The Committee was presented with two case studies from the CIPFA Better Governance Forum Ethical Standards Workshops for its consideration and views.

The two case studies related to Disclosure of Confidential Information and Bullying. The Committee was provided with relevant extracts from the Code of Conduct. Both cases were discussed by the Committee.

RESOLVED that the information be received.

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45/08 **Local Assessment Framework**

The Committee received and considered the following information in relation to the Local Assessment Framework:-

1. Toolkit documentation
2. Making a Complaint - Standards Board Guidance

Item 1 - The Monitoring Officer explained that he intended to expand on the references to confidential information in the toolkit in order to make it more specific. It was noted that the word 'advice' needed replacing with the word 'reasons' in bullet point 11 of letter reference MJF/002 of the toolkit.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

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46/08 **Information/Discussion Items**

The Committee received and considered the following information:-

1. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2007/08
2. Standards Committee Members and Officers Training and Development
3. New Standards Board Chairman
4. Learning and Development Strategy for Members - Progress Update

Item 2 - The Monitoring Officer advised that there were plans to arrange a training session on Local Assessment around July/August for all Standards Committee members across the Tess Valley, including the Police and Fire Authorities' Standards members. Hartlepool Council were initiating it but it was expected that the venue for the training would be in Stockton.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

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47/08 **Standards Committee Forward Plan 2008/09**

The Committee was presented with the Forward Plan 2008/09.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.