

Standards Committee

A meeting of Standards Committee was held on Thursday, 25th September, 2008.

Present: Mr F W Hayes(Chairman), Mrs E Chapman(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs Lynne Apedaile, Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Ken Dixon, Mr T. Bowman(Parish Representative), Mr C.V Algie(Parish Representative), Mr R Mosley(Substitute Parish Representative)

Officers: D.E Bond, A Squires, S Johnson, K Wannop(LD)

Also in attendance: Cllr J Fletcher

Apologies: Cllr I Dalgarno, Mrs F Robinson(Independent)

STD Declarations of Interest

67/08

There were no declarations of interest.

STD Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 4th July 2008 and 31st July 2008 - For **68/08 Signature**

The minutes of the meetings held on 4th July 2008 and 31st July 2008 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

STD Constitutional Update

69/08

Consideration was given to a report that provided the Committee with details of the updated Executive Functions delegations, the revised Local Choice and Council Functions delegations and of the proposed changes to other parts of the Constitution. In particular, the Committee's attention was drawn to amendments to its functions and delegations as set out on Article 9 and Part 3. Cabinet would be considering all of these revisions at the meeting on 9 October 2008 with a view to appropriate decisions being taken by Council on 15 October.

RESOLVED that the information be received.

STD Attendance at Town/Parish Council Meetings

70/08

Consideration was given to a report relating to attendance at Town/Parish Council Meetings by members of the Committee.

Details of the assessments of the following meetings were provided at the meeting for consideration and responses were agreed for the purposes of feedback to the relevant Town/Parish Councils:

Carlton Parish Council, 1 September 2008 – attended by Mrs F Robinson and Mr C Nestor.

Redmarshall Parish Council, 8 September 2008 - attended by Mr F Hayes and Mr R Mosley.

Yarm Town Council, 9 September 2008 - attended by Mr F Hayes and Mr T Bowman.

Hilton Parish Council on the 10 September 2008 - attended by Mr C Nestor and Mr R Mosley.

Elton Parish Council on the 18 September 2008 - attended by Mrs E Chapman

and Mr R Mosley - the Committee agreed that consideration of the relevant feedback would be deferred to a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the Director of Law and Democracy formulates letters in the Chairman's name to the clerks of the town/parish councils for approval by the Chairman, in order to provide feedback on the Standards Committee's Members observations at the recent town/parish council meetings

**STD
71/08** **Local Assessment - Case Studies**

The Committee considered two case studies from an LGG Local Assessment Workshop.

Members of the Committee considered and discussed the two allegations and provided their views on whether there had been an apparent breach of the code and, if so, whether they considered that further action was necessary.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

**STD
72/08** **Local Assessment Framework**

The Committee were asked to consider the following information regarding the Local Assessment Framework, taking into account the changes referred to verbally at the meeting by the monitoring officer:

- Review Sub-Committee Minutes – 14 August 2008 meeting
- Standards Board - Quarterly Statistics - Quarter 1
- Hearings Procedure
- Note for Chairman (Hearings Sub-Committee)
- Guidance on excluding the public from meetings or hearings, and exempt information categories
- Guidance on decisions at consideration and hearings sub-committees
- Standards Committee sanctions
- Hearings Sub-Committee:-
 - short written decision
 - full written decision
 - guidance regarding a suspended member's rights and obligations
- Member support information note
- Revised Media Protocol - Standards Committee and Sub-Committees

RESOLVED that the information be noted/endorsed as appropriate.

**STD
73/08** **Information/Discussion Items**

Members were asked to consider the following information:

- Standards Board Press Release - Adjudication Panel Case
- Standards Board Bulletin - Issue 40

The Committee discussed the information on 'Seeking views on adjourning local assessment decisions' within the Standards Board Bulletin – Issue 40. The Committee discussed the suggested approach of adjourning consideration of a case that was considered to be suitable for other action and asking the

Monitoring Officer to find out whether a Member would cooperate. The Committee agreed with the concerns to this approach outlined within the Bulletin and agreed that the complainant would be unlikely to view such an approach favourably. It was agreed that asking the Monitoring Officer to obtain more information about the case and the options available to take other action would be a more appropriate approach, rather than specifically asking the Monitoring Officer to find out about the attitude of the member to other action.

RESOLVED that the information be noted and the approach outlined regarding proposed referrals for other action be endorsed.

**STD
74/08 Standards Committee Forward Plan 2008/09**

Consideration was given to the updated version of the Standards Committee Forward Plan.

RESOLVED that the Standards Committee Forward Plan be noted/received.