

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE
6TH JULY 2010

SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING – 20th JULY 2010

(To be read in conjunction with the Agenda for the Meeting)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| * Mr David Wheatley (Chairman) | * Ms Karen Heenan |
| * Mr Nicolas Davies (Vice-Chairman) | Cllr Mrs Janet Maines |
| Cllr Victor Duckett | Cllr Nick Morris |
| * Cllr Richard Gates | * Cllr David Munro |
| * Cllr Michael Goodridge | * Cllr John Savage |
| * Cllr Tony Gordon-Smith | * Cllr Richard Terry |
- *Present

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN (Agenda Item 1)

Mr David Wheatley was elected as Chairman of the Standards Committee for the Municipal Year 2010-11.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN (Agenda Item 2)

Mr Nicolas Davies was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Standards Committee for the Municipal Year 2010-11.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 4)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Victor Duckett, Janet Maines and Nick Morris.

4. MINUTES (Agenda Item 5)

The Minutes of the Standards Committee held on 23rd March 2010 were confirmed and signed.

5. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (Agenda Item 6)

There were no Declarations of Interest.

PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

There were no matters falling within this category.

PARTS II AND III – MATTERS OF REPORT

Background Papers

The background papers relating to the following reports in Parts II and III are as specified in the Agenda for the meeting of the Standards Committee.

Part II – Matters reported in detail for the information of the Council

There were no matters falling within this category.

Part III – Brief summaries of other matters dealt with

6. **MONITORING OFFICER UPDATE** (Agenda Item 8)

The Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that since the general election and the subsequent formation of the Coalition Government there had been a number proposals emerging for the way forward in achieving significant savings in the public sector. Members noted, in particular, that the coalition document had put forward the proposal for abolishing the 'Standards Board regime'.

The Committee was advised that the Monitoring Officer had since received a letter from Standards for England informing him that with the Annual Assembly had been cancelled because the details of changes to the regime would not be available by that time. He had also been informed that although the Council was no longer required to submit a quarterly return, until there was a change to legislation and regulation, the existing arrangements must remain in place and Standards Committees should carry on their business as usual.

The Committee was asked how it would like to proceed, particularly in relation to training and development of relationships with the Borough's Town and Parish Councils, Members agreed that a letter should be written to Towns and Parishes advising them about the latest position and, once more information was known, the Chairman and Monitoring Officer attend the next quarterly meeting between Waverley and the Town and Parishes in September to discuss the way forward.

The Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that he had received relatively few enquiries from Members over the last quarter and this was possibly because they were becoming more familiar with the Code of Conduct.

The Monitoring Officer also advised the Committee that in order to better promote the work of the Standards Committee, he and the Deputy Monitoring Officer had looked at the current content of the website which was brief and not very useful. Members were presented with draft wording for a revised internet page and although pleased with its basic format, they requested that it be made clearer what the responsibility of the Standards Committee was first i.e. its education role for Borough, Town and Parish Councils and not just dealing with complaints. The Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer were asked to make the implement the amended web content.

7. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE (Agenda item 9, Appendix A)

The Committee received the Annual Report 2009/10 which summarised the activities of the Standards Committee over the last year. Members were asked to consider the report prior to its formal publication on the Council's website.

The Committee reviewed the Annual Report and agreed that in making reference to complaints, names should be excluded regardless of whether or not they were referred for an investigation. Members agreed that, subject to some other minor amendments, the Annual Report, attached at Annexe 1 for information, be placed on the Council's website.

RESOLVED that, the Annual Report be approved.

8. DISPENSATIONS (Agenda item 10, Appendix B)

The Committee noted that on 11th and 20th May 2009 it had granted dispensations to a number of members who were Farnham Town Councillors to enable them to participate in discussions of items of business that concerned the South Street Trust, of which Farnham Town Council was the sole trustee. A further request had been made by Farnham Town Councillor Storey. The Monitoring Officer recommended to the Committee that it considered placing a time limit of May 2011 in order to place a requirement on all Members of the Town Council who may be elected in May 2011 to seek a fresh dispensation.

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) (Dispensations) Regulations 2002, an individual dispensation be granted to Councillor Storey for a period of 10months from the date of the meeting to allow him to consider and participate in the business at meetings of Farnham Town Council when it meets as Trustee of the South Street Trust.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and concluded at 7.45 pm.

Chairman

