

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**Agenda item 2**

**7 December 2007**

**Present:** Mr Simon Lainé (Chair), Mr John Leamon (Vice-Chair), Mr David O'Connor  
Parish Councillor Stuart Fowler  
Councillors Tina Franklin, David Prince and Robin MacDonald.

**Apologies:** Mr John Cripps

**Also in attendance:**

**(4.00 – 5.55 pm)**

**1. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2007 be approved and signed as a true record.

**2. MATTERS ARISING**

Page 1, item 5 – the democratic services manager agreed to circulate the timetable of parish council and council meetings as soon as possible.

**\*DSM\***

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**4. MEMBERS REPORTS ON ATTENDANCES AT COUNCIL, COMMITTEE AND PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS AND OTHER MEETINGS**

The monitoring officer advised members of a meeting of the West Midlands branch of monitoring officers on 7 March 2008 to which the chair, or a member, of local standards committees had been invited. Members nominated Mr Cripps subject to his availability.

**\*MO\***

**6. UPDATE ON LATEST BULLETINS, CASES AND COMPLAINTS**

The monitoring officer had no particular cases or complaints to report. He advised that councils were awaiting the final regulations for local filter which had now been renamed local assessment.

**7. THE REVISED MEMBER/OFFICER PROTOCOL**

The monitoring officer introduced his report which had been circulated with the agenda and referred to the examples from three other local authorities which had been circulated under separate cover. He invited comments from the committee on both the content and the style.

*To be approved at the next meeting of the Standards Committee on 7 March 2008*

The consensus was that members were generally happy with the style of the existing Cheltenham Borough Council protocol and saw no reason to change this. They had some discussion about whether the protocol should be there as guidance or whether it should make it clear that it contained rules which were expected to be followed. It was agreed that the protocol should form part of induction training for new members and the standards committee should be involved. It was agreed to amend the protocol as follows:

- Remove 1.2/1.3
- Remove unnecessary superlatives
- Consider including a paragraph on media protocol

The chair and Mr O'Connor also indicated that they had identified a number of minor amendments in the document and agreed to email them to the monitoring officer for his consideration.

All members to e-mail their comments to the monitoring officer by 21 December 2007.

**\*ALL\***

**RESOLVED: The monitoring officer be instructed to e-mail a revised version of the protocol to the committee before sending it out for consultation and bringing it back to the next meeting of this committee for final sign off.**

#### **8. REVIEW OF PROGRESS AGAINST WORK PLAN**

The workplan was noted. The monitoring officer updated members on the progress he had made regarding possible joint arrangements with other standards committees. He advised that he had received some positive interest from three other local authorities and he was meeting with them on 17 December 2007 to discuss how this could be taken forward. He was not confident that the joint arrangements would be in place for April when the new local assessment arrangements were due to come into force. Therefore he was planning a report to Council in February proposing an expansion to the size of this committee to accommodate the new requirements. It was suggested that the applicants for the independent member position earlier this year were contacted to see if they would still be interested in joining the committee. Parish Councillor Fowler agreed to raise the issue of an additional parish council member at the next C5 meeting in January.

**\*DSM / SF\***

#### **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next ordinary meeting of the Committee will be on 7 March 2008 and it was agreed Mr Leamon would chair.

#### **10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXEMPT INFORMATION**

**RESOLVED:** that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the next two items of business as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 1, Part 1, Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972, namely:-

**Paragraph 1**

**Information relating to any individual**

**13. EXEMPT MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2007 be approved and signed as a true record.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

In response to a question from Mr Leamon the monitoring officer advised that an independent member on the standards committee was precluded from sitting on any other committees of the Council. This would include the role of co-optee on any of the overview and scrutiny committees. However an independent member could attend a committee to give an external view and there were no restrictions on their membership of other external bodies e.g local economic partnership, although they may need to declare an interest at the standards committee for any related agenda items.

The monitoring officer advised that he would be leaving the council at the end of February to take up the position of borough solicitor at the city of York Council. On behalf of the committee the chair thanked him for all the work he had done and wished him good luck in his new role.

**MR SIMON LAINÉ  
CHAIRMAN**