

**Minutes of: STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**Date of Meeting:** 16 January 2003

**Present:** Councillor J Smith (in the Chair);  
Councillors V D'Albert, C M Fitzgerald, D M Higgin and  
S Mason.  
Mrs A Brown, Mr J Lodge and Mr A Withington

**Apologies for Absence:** There were no apologies for absence.

**Public Attendance:** There were no members of the public in attendance.

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**S.973 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on the 30 October 2002, were submitted. Further to Minute S.654, 'Minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee,' it was asked that the further report on the Car Loan Scheme be made available for the next meeting of this Committee.

Mr Withington asked for clarification on the current position regarding payments to Independent Members and on how applications from Independent Members to serve on the Remuneration Panel had been dealt with. The Acting Director of Legal and Democratic Services reported that although the Government had announced its intention to enable meetings allowances to be paid to Co-opted and Independent Members, this had yet to be implemented. However, in light of the Government's intention in this regard, it had not been considered appropriate for Independent Members of the Standards Committee to also be Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

**Delegated decision:**

That the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on 30 October 2002, be approved as a correct record.

**S.974 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made under this item at the meeting.

**S.975 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No members of the public attended the meeting to raise questions about issues within the remit of this Committee.

**S.976 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Delegated decisions:**

1. That the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee held on the 11 December 2002 be noted.

2. That Members be supplied with additional information with regard to Minute SP.866 and the issues surrounding Unsworth and Sunnybank Youth Centre.

**S.977 PERFORMANCE (BEST VALUE) REVIEW – CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

A report by the Executive Member for Resource was submitted which presented the outcome of the Performance (Best Value) Review of Bury MBC's Corporate Governance arrangements, together with the Improvement Plan.

Particular issues raised by Members were as follows:-

- The Committee would welcome any improvements which reduce the level of departmentalism and create an holistic approach to service provision.
- Staff need to feel empowered when carrying out their duties.
- Documents like this one should be written in a format which is easily understood at all levels of the organisation.
- Information should be provided on partnership working and the nature of agreements in place between a particular group or organisation and the Council.

**Delegated decisions:**

1. That the report be noted;
2. That the Assistant Chief Executive be requested to attend the next meeting of the Committee in order to provide information to Members on agreements entered into with partner groups and organisations.

**S.978 PROCEDURES FOR LOCAL INVESTIGATION AND DETERMINATION OF ALLEGATION AGAINST COUNCILLORS**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report on the responsibilities, which would in the future fall upon Standards Committee and Monitoring Officers, for dealing with misconduct allegations when they are made against Council Members. Examples of procedures drafted as a means of dealing with such allegations were included with the report.

It was reported that the Standards Board had indicated that Regulations to be drafted under Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2000 had been further delayed. The Government was proposing an amendment to primary legislation in June. Once regulations had been issued it would be necessary to draw up a procedure on behalf of the Council.

**Delegated decisions:**

1. That the report be noted;
2. That any comments as to what should be included in a procedure for local investigation and determination of allegations against Councillors be forwarded to the Monitoring Officer.

**S.979 INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS**

The Monitoring Officer reported that bulletins dealing with frequently asked questions would be made available to Members on a regular basis.

A new leaflet entitled "Members Behaving Badly" had been produced by the Standards Board and additional copies would be obtained so that they could be made available to Members.

The Monitoring Officer also reported that she would be giving a short presentation to Members of the Planning Control Committee on declarations of interests and other related issues.

**Delegated decision:**

That the report be noted.

**J SMITH**  
Chair

**Note: The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 7.40 pm)**