

<b>Minutes of:</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	2 June 2005
<b>Present:</b>	Councillor K Audin (in the Chair); Councillors E B Briggs, R C A Brown, V D D'Albert, J Grimshaw, T Holt and J F Walton
<b>Independent Members:</b>	A Brown, K Wainwright and A Withington
<b>Public Attendance:</b>	There were no members of the public in attendance at the meeting.
<b>Apologies for Absence:</b>	Mr A Loyns

---

**S.76      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

**S.77      PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present to ask questions under this item.

**S.78      MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**It was agreed:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2005 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**S.79      APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER**

It was reported that Anne Brown had been appointed to continue as an Independent Member of the Committee until May 2009.

**It was agreed:**

That the report be noted.

**S.80      INDEPENDENT MEMBERS – COMMITTEE AND SCRUTINY PANEL APPOINTMENT**

It was reported that at its meeting on 18 May 2005, the Annual Council had agreed the following appointments:

Resources and Performance Scrutiny Panel – Kenneth Wainwright.

Audit Committee – Mr A Withington.

Anne Brown indicated how much she had enjoyed serving on the Resource Scrutiny Panel during the last Municipal Year and felt that she was able to make a contribution to its work.

**It was agreed:**

That the report be noted.

**S.81 INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The Monitoring Officer gave a presentation on the work of the Standards Committee and how a case referred to it through the ethical standards machinery would be dealt with. There was a strong connection between community leadership and Standards and reference was made to the way in which adverse national cases around Local Government could adversely affect the public's perception.

A report of the Monitoring Officer was submitted which reminded Members of the Committee's role and terms of reference; considered items dealt with by the Committee in 2004/2005; and put forward suggested issues for determination and consideration by the Committee in 2005/2006.

Reference was made by Members to the need for training in respect of standards issues and it was indicated that a slot on standards training for all Elected Members had been identified and that the Independent and Co-opted Members would be invited.

**It was agreed:**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the suggested work programme for 2005/2006 be agreed.
3. That information be presented to the next meeting on changes made by Members to their entry in the Declarations of Interest Register.

**S.82 PROTOCOL FOR MEMBER AND OFFICER RELATIONS**

It was reported that at the last meeting of the Committee, comments were made on the draft Protocol for Member and Officer relations which was then referred to the Joint Consultative Committee (Corporate), to the Management Board and to the political groups. A revised copy of the draft Protocol, which had taken on board comments made through the consultation process, was submitted.

**RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:**

That the following changes be made to the draft Protocol prior to its submission to Council for approval:-

- § Section 13, "Political Assistants", be deleted and the remaining paragraphs renumbered.
- § Paragraph 14.1 relating to informing Members of issues affecting their Wards be strengthened to emphasise the need to let Members know what changes are taking place, such as, road works, street works and road closures.

- § Paragraph 18 be amended in order to warn Members that whilst Officers may have a legal right to enter private property in order to carry out their duties, this right did not necessarily extend to Members acting independently.

### **S.83 ALLOWANCES FOR INDEPENDENT MEMBERS**

It was reported that at the meeting of the Council held on 6 April 2005, Members had considered a recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel that a Special Responsibility Allowance of £250.00 should be paid to an Independent Member who chaired a Standards Hearing Panel, in recognition of chairing the Hearing and the preparatory work involved.

The Independent Members present at the Committee felt that the Independent Remuneration Panel should have sought their views as to this particular aspect of their considerations. They considered that the payment of an allowance of this type could threaten their independence in the eyes of the public and discussion took place as to whether the payment of expenses and a sum for loss of earnings, up to a figure of £250 was more appropriate. They also felt that this should apply to any Independent Member who sat on a Hearing Panel and not just the Chair.

#### **It was agreed:**

That having listened to the views of the Independent Members on the Committee, the Independent Remuneration Panel be asked to re-consider the suggestion that an allowance of £250 be paid to the Chair of a Hearing Panel and that in its place, out of pocket expenses and loss of earnings allowance up to a maximum of £250 be paid, to any Independent Member who sits on a Hearing Panel.

### **S.84 STANDARDS BOARD ROAD SHOW**

It was reported that the Standards Board Road Show had taken place in Manchester on 24 May 2005. The Chair reported that the following issues had been debated:-

- § The headquarters of the Standards Board will be moving from London to Manchester.
- § Consultation on a revised Code of Conduct was still taking place and any comments should be forwarded to the Standards Board by 17 June 2005.
- § Discussions had taken place as to the obligation upon Members to report breaches of the Code of Conduct and whether this should be for serious breaches only.
- § A discussion took place on whether incidents of disrepute should apply to a Councillors private life.

Standards Committee, 2 June 2005

**It was agreed:**

That the report be noted.

**COUNCILLOR K AUDIN**  
**Chair**

**(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.15 pm)**

