

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 8 July 2008

Time: 6.00 p.m.

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Stevenage

Present: Stewart Gillies - Independent (Chair), M.
Downing, CC, Ananda Hale - Independent,
Allen Holland - Independent, P.D. Kissane,
M. Notley, B.G. Underwood

Agenda Item:

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In Attendance:

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6.00 p.m.
End Time: 7.00 p.m.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no apologies for absence and no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February, 2008 having been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

It was RESOLVED that the Terms of Reference for the Committee be noted.

4 LOCAL ASSESSMENT OF COMPLAINTS

The Borough Solicitor presented a report detailing the introduction of necessary procedures for the local assessment of complaints against members. The changes as part of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act meant that all allegations about Members breaching the Code of Conduct would be referred to the Standards Committee instead of an Ethical Standards Officer employed by the Standards Board for England.

A discussion was had regarding whether the Monitoring Officer should disclose notification of a complaint to the Member involved. On balance it was agreed that the Monitoring Officer should advise the relevant Member that a complaint had been received and the section of the Code covering the alleged breach.

Following further discussion, it was RESOLVED that

1. An Assessment Sub-Committee be established with a quorum of three, with the following membership:

Stewart Gillies (Independent Member) (Chair)
Allen Holland (Independent Member)
Councillors Michael Downing, Brian Underwood and Margaret Notley

The terms of reference of the Sub-Committee to be to perform the functions set out in Section 57A Local Government Act 2000.

2. A Review Sub-Committee be established with a quorum of three with the following membership:

Ananda Hale (Independent Member) (Chair)
Councillors Mrs Joan Lloyd, David Kissane and Graham Snell

The terms of reference for the Sub-Committee to be to perform the functions set out in Section 57B Local Government Act 2000.

3. That the arrangements for publicising the complaints system be noted.
4. That the procedure rules for the local assessment of complaints against members be adopted including the assessment criteria and the provisions for dealing with anonymous complaints, as set out in Appendix II to the report and that these be made publicly available.
5. That the Borough Solicitor should adopt a policy of disclosing to a Member that a complaint has been made against him or her before an Assessment Sub-Committee has considered the complaint and issued a decision.

5 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None

6 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

None

7 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None