

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE – Meeting held on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2006.**

Present:-

### **Co-opted Independent Members:-**

The Reverend Paul Lipscomb (Chair), Messrs Fred Ashmore, Mike Field and Zahire Khan.

### **Elected Members:-**

Councillors Neil Arnold, Michael Holledge, Pauline Key, Mewa Mann and Lydia Simmons.

### **Parish Council Representative:-**

Wexham Court Parish Councillor David Maclsaac.

## **PART I**

### **22. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **23. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **24. Members' Performance Monitoring Panel Proposals**

The Member Services Manager sought approval for the Panel's proposals for monitoring Members' performance to be deferred to the Committee's next Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2006. Deferral of this matter was being sought to allow the schedule setting out Members' roles and responsibilities to be amended to take into account past changes in the Council's democratic structure and, where applicable, make them less prescriptive to allow changes in practice over time to be accommodated.

The Committee was informed that to date no formal response had been received from Members to the Panel's proposals and deferral of this matter would also allow any late comments or observations to be submitted and considered.

The Committee was advised that the Deputy Leader of the Council had informally expressed some concern about how robust the current requirements were for Members to make themselves available to constituents. This was discussed by the Committee but no changes were proposed.

There was also some discussion concerning Members' attendance at meetings and the tendering of apologies and it was proposed and accepted

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that although ideally, apologies should be tendered before the meeting, if the Member could show good cause as to why this had not been possible it should be acceptable to do it retrospectively. It was also suggested that if a Member failed to attend three successive meetings of a Committee, Sub-Committee or Panel of which he was a Member, this matter should be brought to the attention of the Member concerned, a reason for repeated non-attendance sought and a report should be submitted to the Standards Committee and, if appropriate, the subject Member's Group Leader.

**Resolved** - That consideration of this matter be deferred to the Committee's Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2006 to allow the schedule of Members' roles and responsibilities and performance indicators to be amended as recommended and to also take into account the proposals now made by the Committee.

### **25. Appointment of Deputy Monitoring Officer**

The Director of Law and Corporate Governance, Monitoring Officer, submitted an information report advising the Committee that, following the departure of the Assistant Director (Legal and Procurement Services) Mrs Isabella Freeman, he had appointed Mrs Jill Bell, Principal Solicitor (Contracts) as the Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer with effect from 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2005.

He also advised that other staff in the Legal Section would be undertaking investigations on his behalf in respect of complaints about Members' conduct referred to him by an Ethical Standards Officer.

**Resolved** - That the position be noted.

### **26. Standards Board for England Training DVD – “Going Local – Investigations and Hearings”**

The Committee was shown a DVD entitled “Going Local – Investigations and Hearings” which had been produced and issued by the Standards Board for England as a training tool for Members and Officers involved in local investigations and hearings.

**Chair.**

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.15 p.m. and closed at 7.10 p.m.)