

Date of issue: 1st June 2010

MEETING:

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

CO-OPTED INDEPENDENT MEMBERS:

Mr Fred Ashmore, Mr Mike Field and Dr Henna Khan
and The Reverend Paul Lipscomb

ELECTED MEMBERS:-

Councillors Bal, P Choudhry, Maclsaac, M S Mann,
P K Mann and Munkley

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS:-

Parish Councillor Howard Jones, Parish Councillor Dalip
Rajput and Parish Councillor Alan Tilbury

DATE AND TIME:

WEDNESDAY, 9TH JUNE, 2010 AT 6.30 PM

VENUE:

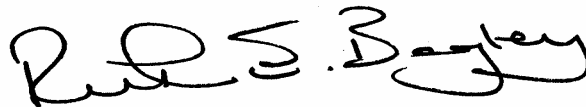
COMMITTEE ROOM 2, TOWN HALL, BATH ROAD,
SLOUGH

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
OFFICER:
(for all enquiries)**

JUNE COOK
01753 875019

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



RUTH BAGLEY
Chief Executive

NOTE TO MEMBERS

This meeting is an approved duty for the payment of travel expenses.

AGENDA

PART I

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
	Apologies for absence.		
1.	Declarations of Interest (Members are reminded of their duty to declare personal and personal prejudicial interests in matters coming before this meeting as set out in the Local Code of Conduct)		
2.	Election of Chair		
3.	Minutes of the last Meeting held on 29th March 2010	1 - 4	
4.	Election of Vice-Chair		
5.	Appointment of Standards (Assessment) Sub-Committee The Vice-Chair and one Independent Co-opted Member together with 3 elected Members drawn by lot from a pool comprising all Borough Council elected Members on the Committee. If the complaint relates to a Parish Councillor, a Parish Council Representative on the Committee, drawn by lot, will also sit on the Sub-Committee. .		
6.	Appointment of Standards (Review) Sub-Committee The Chair and one Independent Co-opted Member together with 3 elected Borough Council Members not on the Standards (Assessment) Sub-Committee. If the complaint relates to a Parish Councillor, a Parish Council Representative on the Committee, drawn by lot, will also sit on the Sub-Committee.		

AGENDA
ITEM

REPORT TITLE

PAGE

WARD

7. Appointment of Standards (Determination) Sub-Committee

The Chair of the Committee plus 2 Independent Co-opted Members and 2 elected Members drawn from the membership of the Standards Committee. as and when required.

If the complaint relates to a Parish Councillor, a Parish Council Representative on the Committee will also sit on the Sub-Committee.

8. Appointment of Standards (Dispensation) Sub-Committee

Two Independent Co-opted Members and 3 elected (Borough Council) Members.

Press and Public

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Special facilities may be made available for disabled or non-English speaking persons. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.

This page is intentionally left blank

Standards Committee – Meeting held on Monday, 29th March, 2010.

Present:-

Co-opted Independent Members:-

The Reverend Paul Lipscomb (Chair), Mr Fred Ashmore, Mr Mike Field and Dr Henna Khan (arrived at 6.40 p.m.)

Elected Members:-

Councillors P Choudhry, Hewitt and Mann

Parish Councillor Representatives:-

Parish Councillors Howard Jones, Dalip Rajput and Alan Tilbury

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors MacIsaac and Qureshi

PART I

20. Declarations of Interest

None.

21. Steven Quayle - Borough Secretary and Solicitor

The Chair advised the Committee that this was Mr Quayle's last meeting as he was due to retire from the Council's service on 31st March, 2010. The Committee Members expressed their sadness and regret at Mr Quayle's departure and it was

Resolved – That the Committee place on record its best thanks and appreciation to Mr Quayle for all his work and support for the Committee since its inception in May 1999 and convey to him its very best wishes for the future.

22. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 11th January, 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

23. Parish Council Representatives

The Committee welcomed Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Councillor Howard Jones and Britwell Parish Councillor Alan Tilbury who had been appointed to serve on the Standards Committee for the remainder of the current municipal year following the resignations of Parish Councillors Nicoline Brandligt and Laurie Tucker.

Standards Committee - 29.03.10

24. Annual Review for 2009/2010

The Borough Secretary and Solicitor sought the Members' views and suggestions on the format and content of the Standards Committee's Annual Review for 2009/2010.

Resolved – That the current format adopted in respect of the Committee's Annual Review be retained and the Review for 2009/2010 be prepared in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

(Note: Dr Henna Khan arrived).

25. Criteria for Granting Dispensations

The Standards Committee (Further Provisions) England Regulations 2009 set out new rules for the granting of dispensations in certain circumstances where Members had a personal and prejudicial interest. Under the Regulations a Standards Committee could grant a dispensation to a Member in the following circumstances:-

- (a) Where more than 50% of the Members who would be entitled to a vote at a meeting are prohibited from voting as they have a personal and prejudicial interest, or
- (b) Where the number of Members that are prohibited from voting at a meeting would upset the political balance in the meeting to the extent that the outcome of the voting would be prejudiced.

To decide whether these criteria applied, Members had to ignore any dispensations that had already been given to others at the meeting. This meant previously granted dispensations were disregarded for the purposes of working out whether the two circumstances above applied. Even where the criteria applied Members could not obtain a dispensation to:-

- allow them to take part in voting at an Overview & Scrutiny Committee about a decision made by any body of which they were a member at the time the decision was taken.
- allow an Executive Member with a prejudicial interest in an item of executive business to take an executive decision about it on their own.

A Member seeking a dispensation was required by law to submit an application in writing for consideration by the Standards Committee and it was up to the Committee to decide whether or not to grant a dispensation. There was no right of appeal from its decision.

The Standards Committee could decide the nature of the dispensation granted. For example, the dispensation might allow a Member to speak and not vote or to fully participate and vote. The Committee could also decide

Standards Committee - 29.03.10

how long a dispensation should apply although it could be no longer than 4 years. After 4 years the dispensation automatically expired. Any dispensation decision had to be recorded in writing and kept with the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

The Borough Solicitor and Secretary submitted the issues and criteria to be considered when granting dispensations which had been set out in the guidance document entitled "Dispensations" published by Standards for England which he considered would be adequate for the purposes of the Council. He indicated that it was highly unlikely that the circumstances set out in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) above would apply to the Council and for this reason he considered no additional local criteria would be necessary.

Resolved –

- (a) That a Standards (Dispensation) Sub-Committee comprising two Independent Members and three Councillors be appointed to consider requests for dispensations.
- (b) That Councillors Choudhry, Hewitt and Mann together with The Reverend Paul Lipscomb and Mr Mike Field be appointed to serve on the Standards (Dispensation) Sub-Committee for the remainder of the current municipal year.
- (c) That the Member Services Manager be requested to prepare an application form for use by Members who wished to apply for a dispensation.
- (d) That the issues and criteria to be considered when granting dispensations as set out on pages 5 and 6 of the guidance issued by Standards for England entitled "Dispensations" be adopted.
- (e) That the Member Panel on the Constitution be requested to recommend to Council that the Constitution be amended to reflect the establishment of the new Standards (Dispensation) Sub-Committee and its terms of reference now submitted.

26. Standards Committee Work Programme 2009/2010

The Officers submitted for consideration the Committee's revised Work Programme for 2009/2010.

In considering the programme attention was drawn to the Members' Training Programme and the need to address the issue of Members' behaviour at meetings. The Member Services Manager indicated that guidance on meeting etiquette could be incorporated into the Member training session on 'Council and Committees' scheduled to be held on 17th May, 2010 and the general issue of Members' behaviour at meetings could also be addressed at the session on the Local Code of Conduct to be held on 12th May, 2010.

Standards Committee - 29.03.10

The Chair of the Committee referred to a recent report of the Audit Commission in which it had suggested that the Council should more widely publicise the work of the Standards Committee and intimated that there was additional work/issues which the Committee needed to address. The Borough Secretary and Solicitor was seeking clarification of both these matters from the Audit Commission and it was suggested that the Committee's Work Programme should be amended to incorporate any recommendations from the Audit Commission.

Resolved - That the current work programme for 2009/2010 now submitted be noted.

27. Vote of Thanks

Resolved - That the Committee place on record its thanks and appreciation to The Reverend Paul Lipscomb for the courtesy and impartiality he has demonstrated as Chair of the Committee during the past municipal year and its thanks to the other Independent Members and Officers of the Committee for their services.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.03 pm)