

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
ROOM 27, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 2 MARCH 2010, AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT:

District Council Members:

Councillors R L Parker, P A Ruffles,
J Warren and M Wood

Town Councils' Representatives:

Mrs E Woods

Parish Councils' Representatives:

Mr C Marks

Independent Members:

Mr S Bouette
Mr D Farrell
Mr J Morphew
Mr T Vickers

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services/ Monitoring Officer
Jeff Hughes	- Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services

592 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Mr J Jones.

593 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor P A Ruffles declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the matter recorded at Minute 596 below as he had a close working relationship with the Member involved. He left the meeting before this item was considered.

RESOLVED ITEMS594 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 2 December 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

595 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee considered whether or not to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion of the item of business detailed at Minute 596 below on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 7C of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The Committee agreed that this item should be considered in public.

The Committee also agreed that both the Monitoring Officer's and Investigating Officer's report on the complaint, as now submitted, should be made public.

596 COMPLAINT IN RESPECT OF TOWN COUNCILLOR:
REFERENCES HTC/01/2009A AND HTC/02/2009B

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report in respect of two complaints concerning Hertford Town Councillor J Hedley.

The complaints had been referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation by the Assessment Sub-Committee.

The Committee noted the details of the complaints.

The Committee considered the Investigating Officer's report on the complaints and the conclusions reached.

The Monitoring Officer advised that the Committee was required to consider the Investigating Officer's report and make one of the following findings:

- (a) the matter should be considered at a hearing (of the Committee) conducted under Regulation 18, or
- (b) the matter should be referred to the Adjudication Panel for England for determination.

The Committee noted the criteria for referring a matter to the Adjudication Panel.

It was agreed that the matter should be considered at a hearing of the Standards Committee as soon as possible.

In response to comments from Members, the Monitoring Officer undertook to notify the subject Member that:

- the Committee would expect to receive objective medical evidence in support of any mitigating representations concerning his health and behaviour both at the time of the complaints and currently;
- he would be invited to confirm (or otherwise) acceptance of matters of fact detailed within all of the papers now before the Committee.

RESOLVED – that, in respect of complaints referenced HTC/01/2009A and HTC/02/2009B, the Investigating Officer's findings be considered at a hearing of the Committee conducted under Regulation 18 of The

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Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008.

- (Notes:
1. The Committee received confirmation during the meeting that Hertford Town Council did have a protocol on bullying and harassment.

 2. The Committee made a number of comments concerning the administration processes around standards complaints. The Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services confirmed that these comments would be addressed.)

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm

Chairman
Date