

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
ROOM 27, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
THURSDAY 19 APRIL 2012, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

District Council Members:

Councillors A Burlton and N Poulton.

Independent Members:

Mr S Bouette
Mr D Farrell
Mr J Morphew
Mr T Vickers (Chairman)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader

779 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor M Wood, Mr J Jones, Mr C Marks and Mrs E Woods.

780 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated that in the absence of a Parish representative, the Committee could not consider any parish matters. The Monitoring Officer advised that the substantive item of business on the agenda would need to be a recommendation to Council.

781 MINUTES

In respect of Minutes 712 – 713 – Complaint in Respect of a Parish Councillor (Reference HORM/03/2011), it was noted that Mr C Marks had, in fact, as the complainer, declared a personal and prejudicial interest and had left the room whilst these matters were considered.

Arising from Minute 713 - Complaint in Respect of a Parish Councillor (Reference HORM/03/2011), the Committee noted that the letter of apology, as sanctioned by the Committee, had not yet been received. The Committee instructed the Monitoring Officer to ascertain from the Parish Clerk whether the letter had been received, and if not, to write to Councillor Kilby informing him that if the apology was not received within seven days, then the matter would be reported further to the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2012, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the addition of Mr C Marks' declaration, as now detailed; and

(B) the Monitoring Officer be instructed to ascertain from the Parish Clerk whether the letter of apology had been received, and if not, to write to Councillor Kilby informing him that if the apology was not received within seven days, then the matter would be reported further to the Standards Committee.

782 LOCALISM ACT 2011

Further to the Committee's consideration of this matter at the previous meeting (Minute 710 refers), the Monitoring Officer submitted a report proposing a new standards regime on the basis of the comments made.

In respect of the proposed code of conduct, the Committee noted that, once approved, the Monitoring Officer would produce separate codes for the District Council and Town/Parish Councils. The Committee supported the draft code as detailed at Essential

Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted, subject to the inclusion of a reference to gifts and hospitality.

In terms of the complaints procedure, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'C' of the report submitted, the Committee agreed this in outline, subject to a number of further amendments. The Monitoring Officer undertook to circulate an updated version to Members.

The Committee also considered the terms of reference for the proposed Standards Committee and Standards Sub-Committee, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'D' of the report submitted. The Committee supported these, subject to a number of amendments. The Monitoring Officer undertook to circulate updated versions to Members.

The Committee agreed that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to refer the code of conduct, the complaints process and the terms of reference for the Standards Committee and Standards Sub-Committee to the Council meeting on 16 May 2012, on the basis of the comments now detailed. The Committee also agreed to delegate authority for making typographical and non-material amendments to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Committee Chairman.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the code of conduct, the complaints process and the terms of reference for the Standards Committee and Standards Sub-Committee, as now amended, be approved; and

(B) authority for making typographical and non-material amendments be delegated to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Committee Chairman.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Chairman

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Date

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