

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **20TH FEBRUARY 2006**

PRESENT: Mrs C A Vant (Chairman);
Cllr. Davidson (Vice-Chairman);
Cllrs. Mrs Larkin, Wickham, Yeo

Mr D Lyward – Parish Council Representative
Mrs M Bracher – (Substitute)
Dr. T Johnson, Mrs K McNicol – Independent Members

APOLOGY: Cllr. Cooling

ALSO PRESENT: Monitoring Officer, Deputy Monitoring Officer, Member Services Officer

512 MINUTES

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on the 11th May 2005 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

513 MATTER REFERRED FOR LOCAL INVESTIGATION - CASE LGA/KM/104 (SBE 10761.05)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer explained the procedure: the matter had been referred by the Standards Board for England for investigation. The investigation had been undertaken by an external investigator. The Investigator had found no breach of the relevant Code of Conduct.

The Committee now had to decide:-

- (i) Whether it accepted the Investigator's findings that there had been no failure to comply with the relevant Code of Conduct or whether the matter should be considered at a Hearing of the Standards Committee.
- (ii) Whether it accepted the recommendations set out in paragraph 7.3 and 7.7 of the report.

514 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved:

That pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item namely Matter Referred for Local Investigation Case LGA/KM/104 (SBE 10761.05) as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure of exempt information hereinafter specified by reference to Paragraph 19 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as modified in relation to Local Determinations by Standards Committee)

515 MATTER REFERRED FOR LOCAL INVESTIGATION - CASE LGA/KM/104 (SBE 10761.05) (CONTINUED)

The Monitoring Officer and Committee discussed the report. The report was felt to have been well investigated and the Committee agreed with the Investigator that there appeared to have been no breach of the Code for any of the four allegations. However, the Committee expressed concern over the conduct referred to in paragraphs 6.4 and 6.5 and felt this had not been appropriate. The Committee asked the Monitoring Officer to draw the attention of the Parish Council to these concerns.

The Committee considered the recommendations brought forward within the report. They felt it was important for Parish Councils to follow the appropriate Good Practice protocol. They also confirmed that where possible meetings should be held in public venues.

Resolved:

- That
- (i) the Standards Committee accept the findings of the Investigator that for all four allegations there had been no failure to comply with the relevant Code of Conduct.**
 - (ii) the Standards Committee agree with both the recommendations put forward by the independent Investigator and request the Monitoring Officer to draw these matters to the attention of the Parish Council.**
 - (iii) the Monitoring Officer be asked to raise the Committee's concerns regarding the practices referred to in paragraphs 6.4 and 6.5 of the Investigator's report..**
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