

STANDARDS COMMITTEE
08 JUNE 2011

Present: Independent members: -
Mrs S Fellows (in the Chair)
Mr R Spiring

Councillors Corello, Daniel, Finch, Gurney, Wincott.

Apologies were received from Councillor Roberts.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2010 be approved and signed by the chair as a correct record.

3. ANNUAL REPORT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE TO COUNCIL

Jayne Butters, Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer presented a draft report to Council on the activities of Standards Committee for the previous municipal year.

RESOLVED - that the draft report be agreed for reference to Council.

4. THE LOCALISM BILL AND THE FUTURE OF STANDARDS

Jayne Butters, Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer presented a report advising the Committee of the provisions in the Localism Bill concerning the standards framework.

The report noted that the Localism Bill proposes considerable changes to the current ethical framework and it is timely that Standards Committee should be familiar with the proposed changes and the implications for the Council.

The Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer noted that although the provision in the Localism Bill for a relevant authority to adopt a code of conduct is voluntary rather than compulsory, it does impose a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority. The Committee acknowledged that this would be difficult to administer without some form of standards framework.

Members felt that it would be beneficial to adopt an approach that is consistent with other East Sussex local authorities. The Borough Solicitor and

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Monitoring Officer agreed to discuss issues raised by the Bill with colleagues from other East Sussex local authorities and report back on their views.

RESOLVED that: -

- (1) the Committee notes the report and requests a further report in due course bringing forward proposals for recommendation to Council;**
- (2) the Borough Solicitor discusses with colleagues in other East Sussex authorities a joint approach to a voluntary code of conduct;**
- (3) it be recorded that the committee values the contribution of independent members and would wish in future to co-opt members to provide that independence of view and approach.**

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 6.29pm)