

## **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**HELD ON MONDAY 1 OCTOBER 2007**

Present: Mr W Local (Chair)  
B Burn, A J Holmes and E Smith

Apologies: B Wilson, Mrs S Mason, Mrs M Goyns  
and Miss J Clark,

1 **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 6 June 2007, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.

### 2 **DVD – THE CODE UNCOVERED**

A DVD produced by The Standards Board to help Monitoring Officers, Councillors and Standards Committees understand their obligations under the new code was shown to members of the Standards Committee.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the content of the DVD, be noted.

### 3 **REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION FROM HASWELL PARISH COUNCIL**

The Monitoring Officer provided details of a request for dispensation from the obligation to declare a prejudicial interest at Haswell Parish Council when considering business which affected the Hazelwell Community Association and Haswell and Haswell Plough Regeneration Partnership, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that Haswell Parish Council regularly considered items of business which affected Hazelwell Community Association and Haswell and Haswell Plough Regeneration Partnership. Four of the nine Members of the Parish Council were involved with these organisations.

The quorum to conduct business was three and the declaration of interest could lead to the Council being unable to progress its business due to the lack of a quorum.

It was not considered likely that any of the four Councillors involved would receive any personal gain from decisions which affected the Association or the Partnership.

The Relevant Authorities Standards Committee (Dispensations) Regulations 2002 permitted the Standards Committee to grant dispensation in those circumstances if they considered that the transaction of the Council's business would be impeded as a result of the Code of Conduct and if taking all these circumstances of the case into consideration they considered it appropriate to grant dispensation.

**RESOLVED** that: -

- (i) approval be granted for the dispensation for the four named Members of Haswell Parish Council to participate and debate in decisions concerning Hazelwell Community Association and Haswell and Haswell Plough Regeneration Partnership;
- (ii) the dispensation to run for the life of the current Council.

**4 REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION FROM HORDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

The Monitoring Officer provided details of a request for dispensation from the obligation to declare a prejudicial interest at Horden Parish Council when considering business which affected the Horden Regeneration Partnership.

Members were advised that Horden Parish Council regularly considered items of business which affected the Horden Regeneration Partnership. Eleven of the fifteen Members of the Parish Council had either a direct or indirect connection to the Regeneration Partnership which created prejudicial interests which lead to the Council being unable to progress its business due to the lack of a quorum.

It was not considered likely that any of the eleven Councillors involved would receive any personal gain from decisions which affected the Partnership.

The Relevant Authorities Standards Committee (Dispensations) Regulations 2002 permitted the Standards Committee to grant dispensation in those circumstances if they considered that the transaction of the Council's business would be impeded as a result of the Code of Conduct and if taking all these circumstances of the case into consideration they considered it appropriate to grant dispensation.

**RESOLVED** that: -

- (i) approval be granted for the dispensation for the eleven Members of Horden Parish Council to participate and debate in decisions concerning the Horden Regeneration Partnership;
- (ii) the dispensation to run for the life of the current Council.

**5 ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF STANDARDS COMMITTEES**

Members were advised that councillor A J Holmes would be attending the Annual Assembly of Standards Committees for England to be held on 15 and 16 October 2007.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**6 ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS**

In accordance with the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, Section 100B(4)(b) the Chair, following consultation with the Proper Officer, agreed that following item of business, not shown on the Agenda, be considered as a matter of urgency.

**7 RESIGNATION (AOB)**

Members were advised that Councillor B Wilson had resigned from the Standards Committee, the Democratic Services Officer explained that a substitute for Councillor Wilson would be appointed.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.