

City of Durham

At a Meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held in the Town Hall, Durham, on Thursday, 22nd May, 2008, at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Mr B.R.J. Ingleby (in the Chair)
and Councillors Holland, Lodge, Simpson and Thompson (City Council Members)
and Councillor J.S. Anderson (Parish Council Member)
and Mr D. Hollingworth and Mrs T. Naples (Independent Members).

24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs Hudson.

25. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th April, 2008, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests received.

Report of Monitoring Officer

27. COMPLAINTS TO THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND SBE 20308.07

Details of the complaint against Councillor Kellett were set out and it was confirmed that the Standards Board for England had determined that no further action be taken.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

28. LOCAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

It was confirmed that Members would sit on two teams as identified in the report for the purposes of handling complaints under the local assessment procedure.

The Monitoring Officer provided to the Committee a draft complaints form which would be completed by those making a complaint in respect of a Member. The complaint form would be accompanied by a guidance leaflet for complainants and details of the guidance and complaints form would be circulated to all parish councils and made available on the council's web site.

Resolved: (i) That papers would only be sent to the team sitting on the initial assessment.

(ii) That a Member identifying a conflict as a consequence of receiving the papers notify the Monitoring Officer immediately in order that alternative arrangements can be made for the assessment.

(iii) That the Monitoring Officer finalise the complaints form and accompanying guidance and circulate it as appropriate.

(iv) That the meeting scheduled to be held on 4th June, 2008, be cancelled.

29. BULLETIN 38

A copy of the latest Bulletin from the Standards Board for England was circulated for Members' information.

30. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) Mrs Naples confirmed that she had been appointed to the City Council's Audit Overview Committee but she did not foresee any conflicts arising from this appointment.

Resolved: That the information be noted.

- (b) The Committee discussed issues of transparency regarding the business of the Committee and asked that, in future, the Monitoring Officer bring to Committee Meetings in information regarding the current status of all complaints which had been made to the Standards Board for England. In addition, the Committee wish to have the opportunity to inspect correspondence if necessary and the Monitoring Officer agreed to make arrangement for the Committee to examine correspondence as appropriate.

Resolved: That the Monitoring Officer proceed as outlined above.

- (c) The Committee welcomed Councillor Lodge to his first meeting of the Standards Committee and congratulated Councillor Holland upon his appointment as Mayor.

The meeting terminated at 6.20 p.m.

Chairman