

City of Durham

At a Meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held in the Town Hall, Durham, on Tuesday, 24th July, 2008, at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Mr B.R.J. Ingleby (in the Chair)
and Councillors Holland, Simpson and Turnbull (City Council Members)
and Councillor J.S. Anderson and Mrs P Hudson (Parish Council Members)

137. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lodge, Mrs T. Naples and Mr D. Hollingworth.

138. MINUTES

It was noted that although Councillor Holland and Mr Hollingworth were recorded as in attendance at the meeting on the 26th June, 2008, this was in fact not the case and their apologies had been received. It was also noted that the Minutes did not reflect that, under any other business, the Committee had discussed the issue of confidentiality. Subject to the above, the Minutes were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

139. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

Report of Monitoring Officer

140. COMPLAINTS TO THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND

(a) SBE21948.08 – SBE2153.08

The above complaint was still with the investigating officer, whose report would be forwarded to the committee for consideration as soon as it was available.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

141. COMPLAINTS TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

(a) SC0001.08

The local assessment panel had met to consider the above on 2nd July, 2008. The complainant had until 15th August, 2008, to request a review of the sub-committee's decision.

Resolved: That the report be noted

(b) SC0002.08

The Monitoring Officer had received a further complaint and would be convening a local assessment panel to consider this complaint.

Resolved: That the report be noted

142. STANDARDS BOARD ANNUAL REVIEW 2007-8

The Monitoring Officer had brought with her the following documentation for Members' consideration:-

- (a) Standards Board for England Annual Review 2007-8
- (b) Report from the Committee on Standards in Public Life 2007-8
- (c) Correspondence from the Standards Board for England requesting examples of good practice.

Resolved: That the report be noted

143. CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) The Chair of the Standards Committee had received an email from Mr Malcolm Stabler in relation to the hearing which had taken place on the 5th March, 2008. Mr Stabler questioned the contents of the Minutes of the meeting, which he had attended as a member of the public. Members discussed whether it had been resolved to exclude the press and public from that hearing. Although officers had confirmed that Members considered the matter and allowed members of the public to remain in the meeting, Members could not recall specifically having done this. They were however satisfied that members of the public did remain in the room and those who were parties to the proceedings did not take issue with members of the public remaining throughout the course of that hearing. In any event, Members were satisfied with the conduct of the hearing and also with the Minutes of the same.

Resolved: That the report be noted

- (b) The Monitoring Officer had also received an email from Mr Stabler who requested that the Monitoring Officer step down in relation to the handling of his complaints. The Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that any concerns regarding the conduct of an officer of the council should be referred to the Council's Head of Paid Service. The Committee expressed their support of the Monitoring Officer and confirmed that they were satisfied with the performance of all officers they had come into contact with.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

The meeting terminated at 6.20 p.m.

Chairman