

City of Durham

At a Meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held in the Town Hall, Durham, on Thursday, 26th June, 2008, at 5.30 p.m.

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

71. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lodge and Thompson, and Mr Hollingworth and Mrs Naples.

72. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd May, 2008, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

73. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

Report of Monitoring Officer

74. COMPLAINTS TO THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND

(a) SBE 21948.08 – SBE 21953.08

The Standards Board for England had confirmed that they had received a complaint in respect of the conduct of five parish councillors. The basis of the complaint was that the Members had participated in a decision by the Parish Council to donate money to a community association when they sat on the management committee of the association.

The Standards Board for England had advised that the matter had been referred to an Ethical Standards Officer, and the Committee would be updated on the progress of the matter in due course.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

(b) SBE 21976.08

The Standards Board for England had received a complaint concerning the alleged conduct of a Member of West Rainton and Leamside Parish Council. The Standards Board for England assessed the allegation and decided not to refer the complaint for investigation as it believed Standards Committee had already taken a view on the veracity of the evidence given by the Councillors and it was therefore not appropriate for the Standards Board to reconsider an aspect of a matter that had already been concluded.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

75. COMPLAINTS TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

A complaint had been received in respect of the conduct of a parish councillor. The basis of the complaint was that the Member had ignored correspondence, admitted acting to confer a detriment on the complainant and, as a consequence, brought the Authority into disrepute.

In accordance with the Local Assessment Procedure, a meeting of the Standards Committee Local Assessment Sub-Committee had now been convened, and Members would be updated on the progress of the matter in due course.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

76. COMPLAINT FORM

A copy of the complaints form had been considered at the last Meeting of the Committee, and following comments made, an updated form had now been produced to reflect these. A copy of the amended form had been circulated.

A copy of the guidance which it was proposed be adopted was also circulated for Members' information.

77. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman requested that all members of the Committee give details of any pre-arranged leave or periods of non-availability for the year to the Monitoring Officer in order that she could convene any investigations necessary.

The meeting terminated at 5.55 p.m.

Chairman

CITY OF DURHAM

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

24 July 2008

REPORT OF MONITORING OFFICER

1. Complaints to the Standards Board for England

The Monitoring Officer has not received notice of any new complaints received by the Standards Board for England.

2. Complaints to the Standards Committee

(i) SC0001.08

A sub-committee met on the 4 July 2008 to consider this matter and determined that no further action should be taken in this regard. The complainant has until 15 August 2008 to request a review of this decision. Details of the case will be reported once a review has taken place, or the period for requesting a review has expired.

3. Standards Board Annual Review 2007-08

The Monitoring Officer has received a number of copies of the Annual Review and has disseminated them to the Executive Director, Leader and Chair of the Standards Committee. Additional copies are available however should members of the Standards Committee have access to the same.

