

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Council Chamber,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Friday
5 May 2006

Time: 1.00 p.m.

Present: L. Petterson (Chairman) and

Councillors A. Gray and J. Wayman J.P

Observer

Mrs. C. Sproat (Sedgefield Borough Council)

Apologies: Councillors Mrs. B. Graham, Mrs. L. Hovvells and G.M.R. Howe

Parish/Town Council member

Councillor J. Marr (Spennymoor Town Council)

Independent Member

Mr. I. Jamieson

ST.32/05

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th April, 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

ST.33/05

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AUDIT COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to a joint report of the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Resources detailing the issues that would need to be considered in the establishment of an Audit Committee. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members were informed of the Council's current position, the views of the Audit Commission to encourage local authorities to establish an Audit Committee and given information on the guidance note issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to aid in the establishment of the audit committee being more effective.

Members were also requested to consider the statement of purpose, the audit committee's core functions, features, structure and composition as detailed in the report.

Detailed discussion was held regarding the composition of the Committee. Concerns were raised as to Cabinet's agreement that the committee should be composed of six members with only one being able to sit on both the Audit Committee and Scrutiny Committee. It was felt that the same ruling should be in place for all members and not just one.

H. Moses explained that the proposals issued by CIPFA had been submitted to Cabinet where the decision had been made to allow: -

“No more than one Member from Cabinet and one member from Overview and Scrutiny Committee to serve on the Audit Committee.”

Members were reminded that the report would be submitted to Annual Council for final consideration therefore concerns should also be raised at that point.

RECOMMENDED: That the proposals outlined in the report be supported subject to further consideration to the Audit Committee’s composition.

ST.34/05

REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION - MEMBER INVOLVEMENT - PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE 'CALL IN' PROCEDURE

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive Officer detailing proposals initiated by Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees to amend the Constitution, specifically ‘call-in’ rules. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Members were reminded of the current rules for call-in and informed of the proposed amendments as detailed in the report.

RECOMMENDED: That the proposal outlined in the report be supported.

ST.35/05

INTERIM MANAGEMENT AND RESTRUCTURING OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Copies of Appendix 2 from the above report were distributed to Members of the Committee for information. (For copy see file of Minutes).

AGREED: That the information outlined in Appendix 2 be noted.

ST.36/05

CHANGES TO POLITICAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer advised that the Committee should adjourn in order for the above report to be finalised and considered by Standards Committee prior to its submission and consideration by Full Council at its Annual General meeting, on 19th May 2006.

Members would be informed of the date of the meeting once arranged.

AGREED: That the meeting be adjourned to consider the Changes To Political Management Structure prior to its consideration by Full Council at the Annual General Meeting on 19th May 2006.

The Committee re-convened on Friday 5th May 2006 May at 1.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Spennymoor with the following Members present: -

I. Jamieson (Chairman) and Councillor A. Gray

Spennymoor Town Council Councillor J. Marr

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive Officer detailing the proposed arrangements for refining the Cabinets portfolios of the Council to more closely align them to the Council's Corporate Ambitions. It also suggested an amendment to the Community Outcomes and Values. (For copy see file of Minutes).

Specific reference was made to the three attached appendices outlining the revisions to the Corporate Ambitions, the Strategic Political Management Structure and the Corporate Ambitions and Political Management.

Discussion was held regarding the changes to Best Value and who had been consulted in producing the proposed changes. A. Boddy informed Members that a number of meetings had taken place with the Audit Commission, Management Team, the Leader of the Council and the Deputy Leader, a Leaders Meeting was then held to discuss the final proposals.

AGREED: *That Council be recommended to approve the revised Community Outcomes and Values, the amendments to the Council's Strategic Political Management Structure and the consequential amendments to the Constitution as outlined in the report.*

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Miss S. Billingham, Tel 01388 816166 Ext 4240, sbillingham@sedgefield.gov.uk