



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Held: WEDNESDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2010 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Ms Kate McLeod (Independent Member) - Chair

Ms Mary Ray

Independent Member

Councillor Clair

Councillor Draycott

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**13. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

In the absence of Sheila Brucciani, it was agreed that Kate McLeod take the Chair for the meeting.

**14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Sheila Brucciani and Councillors Keeling, Porter, Potter and Thomas. Councillor Keeling had asked that it be recorded that he had considered the papers on the agenda and supported all the recommendations.

**15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any interests in the business on the agenda and/or declare if Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them. No such declarations were made.

**16. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee, held on 30 June 2010, be confirmed as a correct record.

**17. STANDARDS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Director of Corporate Governance submitted the Standards Committee terms of reference, which had been updated following comments made at the last meeting.

An amendment was requested to the Standards Sub-Committee (Review) terms of reference, paragraph 4 (ii) to read, "To refer the complaint to the Monitoring Officer for investigation," and paragraph 4(iii) to read, "To refer the complaint to Standards for England."

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the terms of reference for the Standards Committee be recommended to Council for confirmation, and
- 2) That the changes to the terms of reference for the Standards Sub-Committee (Initial Assessment) and Standards Sub-Committee (Review) be adopted.

## **18. COMPLAINTS AGAINST COUNCILLORS - LEAFLET FOR MEMBERS**

The Director of Corporate Governance submitted an amended leaflet that outlined the complaints process for Members.

Members asked that the leaflet be produced on bright coloured paper, laminated and sent out as soon as possible with a covering letter.

RESOLVED:

That the leaflet be confirmed for distribution to Members.

## **19. TERM OF OFFICE FOR INDEPENDENT MEMBERS**

The Director of Corporate Governance submitted a report that proposed changes to the term of office of the Independent Members and the Chair of the Standards Committee subject to further discussion of the options.

It was noted that Sheila Brucciani had been appointed in May 2007 and Kate McLeod and Mary Ray had been appointed in February 2008. It was intended that the Chair be appointed for a four-year term to be in line with the four-year term of either a strong leader or elected mayor, as determined in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, but any decision was subject to potential changes through the anticipated Localism Bill, which was likely to reduce or abolish the Standards regime. The Director of Corporate Governance stated that, if it was to be abolished, there was common law evidence to suggest that some form of dealing with complaints against Councillors and whistleblowing would be required and that details of this would be brought to a future committee meeting. The political conventions also had a role in maintaining standards. Members stated that, previously, such matters were dealt with by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Whips, and that one serious case had been dealt with by full Council, who imposed sanctions.

RESOLVED:

That Members:

- 1) Approve the proposal to appoint Independent Members of the Committee for three and four year terms from May 2011 following recruitment;
- 2) Approve the proposal to stagger future appointments, to provide continuity of experience on the Committee;
- 3) Approve the proposal to have a maximum of two four year terms for any one Independent Member;
- 4) Approve the proposal to appoint a Chair of the Standards Committee for a four year term in May 2011;
- 5) Recommend the changes to Council for approval and for the necessary amendments to the Constitution to be made.

## **20. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 5.50pm