



Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Held: WEDNESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2001 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T :

Mrs Caroline Roberts (Independent Member) - Chair

Ms J Bellingham (Independent Member)      Councillor Draycott  
Councillor Coley                                      Councillor O'Brien

\* \* \* \* \*

**9. MINUTES SILENCE**

The Chair asked the Committee to stand in silence in memory of those who lost their lives following the terrorist attacks in the United States on Tuesday 11 September.

**10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were requested to declare any interests they may have in the business on the agenda and/or indicate if Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

No declarations were made.

**11. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 31 July 2001, having been circulated to Members, be received, taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**12. POLITICAL CONVENTIONS**

The Town Clerk submitted a report seeking the Committee's views on Conventions for Councillor/Officer relationships, incorporating the Councillors' General Principles of Conduct and the model Code of Conduct.

It was agreed that it would be useful if a 'handy' summary of the provisions could be drawn up for easy reference.

RESOLVED:-

That the Political Conventions, incorporating the General

Principles of Conduct and Model Code of Conduct be recommended to the Council as the standards of behaviour the Council expects of its Councillors and Officers, and the ground rules for Councillor/Officer relationships.

### **13. POLITICAL CONVENTIONS - TRAINING OF MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

The Town Clerk submitted a report seeking the Committee's views on the nature and types of training for Members and Officers in relation to the Political Conventions.

The following views were expressed by the Committee:-

- training for Members on the political conventions should be compulsory and be included in the induction process for newly elected Members
- training should include a 'mix' of Members and Officers
- the political conventions and the new rules on Members' Interests which were awaited should be launched together and the existence of the Standards Committee publicised in FACE magazine
- that Members of the Committee would be willing to participate in training events

RESOLVED:

That based on the Committee's views, the Town Clerk work up a detailed training package for delivery to both Members and Officers.

### **14. DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS AGAINST COUNCILLORS**

The Town Clerk submitted a report outlining an updated procedure for dealing with complaints against Councillors following discussions at the last meeting. The report also gave some initial information about the nature of complaints likely to be dealt with locally or nationally.

The Committee asked questions about the range of sanctions that would be available to the Standards Committee and what action could be taken against a Member who continually committed minor breaches. It was noted that detailed guidance was still awaited from Central Government on the question of sanctions. Currently, the Standards Committee's only sanctions were publicity and censure, whilst at a national level, if complaints were referred to the National Standards Board, sanctions could be imposed.

The following comments were made on the procedure:-

- 7 (1) and (2) should include provision for reasons to be given in writing.

- 8, add in after 'The Town Clerk', 'will keep a record of and...'
- 9 required grammatic correction
- 13, clarify that both parties would be able to see the paperwork and include provision to ensure that the document had been received.

Clarification was also sought by the Committee on Section 58 of the Local Government Act 2000 on the definition of 'person'.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the above amendments be made to the procedure for dealing with complaints against Councillors; and
- (2) that the information (statutory and otherwise) concerning the likely framework for handling of complaints against Councillors, be noted.

## **15. NEW ETHICAL FRAMEWORK REGULATIONS AND TIMETABLE**

The Town Clerk submitted a report updating Members of the progress of Regulations to initiate the new ethical framework within local government and the timetable for the remaining items. It was noted that the Standards Committee reflected the requirements of the regulations. The Committee thanked the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk for their work in setting up the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Regulations made to date, those still to come and the implementation timetable currently proposed by the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions, be noted;
- (2) to note that the Standards Committee, as currently operating, conforms in all respects to the requirements of both legislation and regulation.
- (3) to note that the General Principles Order had been approved, bringing into effect the General Principles which are to govern the conduct of Members and co-opted Members, with these principles expected to govern only the official conduct of Members and Co-opted Members, apart from the second and eighth, which have effect on all occasions; and
- (4) to note that the General Principles will be reported to full Council by way of the report on the updated Political Conventions, thereby ensuring that all Members are fully informed of their operation.

**16. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 6.41pm.