

Cherwell District Council

Standards Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 8 April 2009 at 6.30 pm

Present: Douglas Frewer (Chairman)

Sadie Reynolds
Councillor Fred Blackwell
Councillor Mrs Catherine Fulljames
Councillor Eric Heath
Councillor Russell Hurlle
Councillor George Parish
Councillor Devena Rae
Councillor Rose Stratford
Councillor Bernard Lane
Kenneth Hawtin

Substitute
Members: Councillor David Carr
Councillor John Coley
Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Apologies for
absence: Councillor James Macnamara
Jim McBeth
Councillor Alan Greenslade-Hibbert

Officers: Liz Howlett, Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring
Officer
Alexa Coates, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

Recommendations to Council

37 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

38 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

39 Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

40 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

41 **Review and update of the Constitution**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services seeking approval from the Committee to recommend to Council the proposed changes to the constitution.

The Committee considered the proposed changes and made several comments relating to committee terms of reference and procedure rules and the general use of language and public accessibility of the document.

Recommended

- 1) That delegated powers be given to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to make any minor or consequential amendments that may be needed, in particular with inconsistencies or duplications that may exist with in part of the constitution not yet reviewed.
- 2) That the financial limit for key decisions for 2009/2010 be £50,000
- 3) That the constitution is printed in A4 size
- 4) That the Introduction, Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation, Rules of Procedure and Planning Guidance be approved subject to the following amendments (changes shown in bold):
 - a. Page 22 bullet point 1 of the Standards Committee Terms of Reference, amend to: Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by **all** Councillors and co-opted members, **within the district**.
 - b. Page 22 bullet point 3 of the Standards Committee Terms of Reference, amend to: To provide advice and guidance on the Code of Conduct for members of parish and town councils, **through the Monitoring Officer**.
 - c. Page 118, Standards Committee Membership, amend to: Where possible there will also be 2 fully trained substitute parish council members **who can attend as observers only. Please see covering note for implications of this change**
 - d. Page 118, Standards Committee Membership, amend to: The Quorum for the Committee is **5** members including at least one independent member **and one District Councillor**
 - e. Page 119 Assessment subcommittee, add bullet point to options available to the subcommittee:
 - **Take no action**
 - f. Page 119 Notification of subcommittee decisions, amend to: A written notice of the decision of the subcommittee will be given to all the relevant parties within 7 working days of the decision being taken **and a copy presented to Standards Committee at their next meeting**.

- g. Page 58 Attendance at Committee and Subcommittee by those who are not members, **delete: At Planning Committee, they may also sum up their view at the end of the debate.**
- h. Page 117 Member Call-in, amend to: Ward Member Referral **Ward Member referral** of Officer delegated cases...
- i. Page 113 Site Visits, amend to: a majority vote will determine if a site visit is to be taken, **members are advised only to vote if they are able to attend the site visit.**
- j. Page 65 Addresses, amend to: Requests **from the public** to address and the reasons for the address must be received by the Head of Legal and Democratic Service not later than noon on the working day before the meeting.
- k. Page 58 bullet point one, the Head of Legal and Democratic in consultation with the Head of Housing to recommend an appropriate alternative to 'Council Houses'
- l. Page 16 Speaking at a meeting, delete: speak
- m. Page 20 amend order of terms of reference Appeals Panel to follow Personnel Committee
- n. Page 23 Overview and Scrutiny, amend membership to **3** named substitutes for each political group.
- o. Page 88 Task and Finish Groups delete: **(excluding members of staff or other Councillors)** and **Members of staff and other Councillors cannot be cop-opted**
- p. Page 8 set out source of exemption paragraphs
- q. Roles and Appointments, amend last sentence of Leaders of Political Groups paragraph to "**All such notifications shall be reported to Council and recorded in the minutes**".
- r. Amend reference to casual substitutes throughout the document

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm

Chairman:

Date: