
MEETING	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
DATE	26 JANUARY 2007
PRESENT	C BAINTON (INDEPENDENT MEMBER, IN THE CHAIR), CLLRS I WAUDBY (VICE-CHAIR), SCOTT, D'AGORNE, R LEAMAN (INDEPENDENT MEMBER) AND D CRAWFORD (PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER)

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they had in the business on the agenda.

Councillors Scott, I Waudby and D'Agorne declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Items 6 (Amendments to the Members' Code of Conduct) and 7 (Advice to Elected Members and Senior Officers re: Activities during the pre-election Period) on the grounds that they were elected Members.

53. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2006 be approved and signed as a correct record.

54. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's public participation scheme.

55. REVIEW OF WORKPLAN

Members reviewed the workplan for the Standards Committee for the 2006/2007 municipal year. It was agreed that the Officer would look into the status of the 'Report on the Committee on Standards in Public Life' due on 19 May 2007. Members queried whether there would be a meeting of the Standards Committee in May and it was agreed that the Democracy Officer would clarify this with Members having checked the Corporate Diary.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Standards Committee would be moved from 23rd March 2007 to 9th March 2007 at 10am in order to allow Members time to approve the final response to the 'Consultation on Amendments to the Model Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members' and to discuss the Annual Report. The Presentation on the new Committee Management System will be deferred to a later date.

RESOLVED: That the amended workplan, at Annex 1 of the minutes, be approved.

56. CONFIDENTIALITY & TRANSPARENCY SCRUTINY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Members received a verbal report from the Officer on the Confidentiality and Transparency Scrutiny Panel Recommendations. The report had been to Executive last year and concerns had been raised regarding the 42 recommendations. It was reported that there was now a draft report for Officers comments in circulation and the recommendations were due to go back to the Executive on 13 February 2007.

Members said that matters had been complicated by the fact that the recommendations had been drawn up before the New Constitution was in place and some of the 42 recommendations had, since then, been put into place.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted

57. AMENDMENTS TO THE MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Members received a verbal update concerning amendments to the Members' Code of Conduct. The Officer handed out the Consultation Paper (Consultation on Amendments to the Model Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members) and notified Members that the consultation period ended on 9th March 2007. It was agreed that an informal meeting of the Standards Committee would take place on 22nd February 2007 at 10am to collate Members comments. This would be after Members had discussed the Consultation Paper with their groups. The Officer would then draft a response to be presented at the next Standards Committee meeting on 9th March 2007.

RESOLVED: That Members acknowledged receipt of the Consultation Paper and agreed to an informal meeting on 22nd February to discuss its contents.

58. ADVICE TO ELECTED MEMBERS & SENIOR OFFICERS RE: ACTIVITIES DURING THE PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

Members received a report that proposed a draft letter for circulation to all Elected Members and Senior Officers for consideration. The Officer asked that Members clarify who the letter should be sent from, the principle of sending such a letter and the contents of the letter. Members agreed the contents of the letter and suggested that the letter should say that the Standards Board had asked the Officer to write. It should also include a date from when the contents of the letter apply. The letter would be sent to all Members and all Corporate Leadership Groups.

Members suggested an article in the staff magazine would bring the contents of the letter to the attention of all staff and it was agreed that the Officer would contact the Head of Marketing and Communications to implement this.

RESOLVED: That the letter be circulated to all Members and Corporate Leadership Groups to assist in their activities during the pre-election period.

59. ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AUDIT

Members considered a report that provided information to the Standards Committee on the process of undertaking an Ethical Governance Audit and proposals for undertaking this process in City of York Council.

Members agreed that the Head of Civic, Democratic and Legal Services should draft an invitation to quote for a trained practitioner to undertake the Ethical Governance Audit. The Officer stated that in the first instance the Council's documents and protocols would be examined, audits carried out and meetings attended to clarify any problems that there might be.

RESOLVED: That Members:

- i. Note the contents of this report and the process for progressing the Ethical Governance Audit
- ii. Reaffirm their commitment to participating and supporting the Ethical Governance Audit

60. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DECIDES IS URGENT UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972.

The Head of Civic, Democratic and Legal Services updated Members with regard to the Appeal to the High Court by the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone and how this cast some doubt on the ability of the code of conduct to exclude behaviour of Members in their private capacity.

C BAINTON

Independent Member, In the Chair

The meeting started at 3.05 pm and finished at 4.10 pm.

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2006/07 Workplan for Standards Committee

Ongoing Activities

Cases referred for investigation or determination
 Database of Standards Committee topics
 Standards Board Guidance
 Parish Council Issues
 Member and Officer Training

Programme of New Work

<u>Programme of New Work</u>	<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Communication / Strategic Activity</u>
Confidentiality and Transparency – Conclusions of the Executive on the report of the Scrutiny Panel	26 January 2007	
Amendments to the Members' Code of Conduct	26 January 2007	
Advice to Elected Members re activities during the purdah period	26 January 2007	
Ethical Governance Audit	26 January 2007	
Presentation on new Committee Management System	TBA	
Annual Report	23 March 2007	
Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life	TBA	
Parish Councils – Good Practice at Meetings	May 2007	
Review of the Complaints Procedure	TBA	
Employee Code of Conduct – Member/Officer training.	2006/07	

Programme of New Work

Meeting Date

Communication / Strategic Activity

Full Ethical Audit

2006/07

Yes

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) – contribution of Standards Committee

TBA (Late 2007)