

---

MEETING	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
DATE	10 AUGUST 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS BAINTON (INDEPENDENT MEMBER, IN THE CHAIR), CRAWFORD (PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER), ASPDEN (SUBSTITUTE), SCOTT (SUBSTITUTE) AND WATT (SUBSTITUTE)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS KIRK, HORTON, HUDSON AND LEAMAN (INDEPENDENT MEMBER)

---

### 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they had in the business on the agenda. No interests were declared.

### 2. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of 8 June 2007 be approved and signed as a correct record.

### 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

### 4. A PRESENTATION ON THE COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Board members received a presentation which covered the City of York Council's committee management system, Modern.gov.

Members were informed that Modern.gov was introduced:

- to comply with the new e-Government target:  
**R5** Public access to reports, minutes and agendas from past council meetings including future meetings, diary updated daily.
- to speed the circulation of agenda and reports
- to simplify and integrated many of the functions of Democracy and Members Support Group.

Modern.gov is an Internet accessible computer system which integrates:

- Calendar of meetings
- Forward Plan
- Agendas, minutes and reports
- Register of members' interests
- Members' attendances
- Parish Councils information
- Outside Bodies information
- ...and more

Members suggested establishing a user group involving co-opted Members and appropriate external representatives to inform the Council about user ability of the system

Members suggested that contact information and appointment details in relation to the independent standards chair should be available on system.

Members commented that some service description for areas which Executive Members and other Committee's were responsible would be helpful when trying to locate their particular issues.

RESOLVED: To note and thank officers for the presentation.

REASON: To inform Members of the system used by the public, officers and all Councillors.

## **5. REVIEW OF WORKPLAN**

Members considered a workplan for 2007/2008. The amended workplan is attached to these minutes.

Members expressed a wish to be kept informed on a regular basis on recently lodged case's referred to the Standards Board for England.

## **6. VERBAL UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Members received a verbal update on the review of the complaints procedure.

Members were informed that the Head of Civic, Democratic & Legal Services would be leaving early September and Colin Langley, former Head of Legal and Deputy Chief Executive at City of Sunderland Council would be the interim, working 4 days a week, on a 4-6 month contract.

Members were informed that the Assistant Director of Public Services would be leading on drafting a complaints procedure and suitable guidance for staff on dealing with persistent complainants. As part of a consultation exercise on this he would be reporting to social inclusion working groups as well as the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED: That the up to date position on the review of the complaints procedure be noted.

REASON: To keep Members informed on developments of the complaints procedure.

**7. APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION BY BISHOPTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL**

Members consider a report that set out details of applications for dispensations received by Councillors Bruce, Jamison, Dale, Livesley, Dunn, Mellors, Green, Thornton, Harrison and Watkins of Bishopthorpe Parish Council in respect of their participation in the St Andres Reading Room Charity.

Members wished to advise Parish Councillors that in principle they had no objection to the independent running of the village.

Members agreed to defer this item providing that the Parish Council and Trustees provided information in relation to the following prior to the next meeting:

- Quorate requirements for both the Parish Council and the Charity
- Minimum number of Trustees required by the Charity
- Trust documents
- Non-parish Councillors be nominated as Trustees for the Charity
- Prejudicial interests

**RESOLVED:** That this item be deferred, and be considered at the next meeting of this committee on 28 September 2007.

**REASON:** To ensure Members questions are answered before a decision can be made.

C BANTON

Independent Member, In the Chair

The meeting started at 3.00 pm and finished at 4.32 pm.

This page is intentionally left blank

## 2007/2008 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	Report gone to Executive and all recommendations approved. The two matters referred to SMC have been completed.
Amendments to the Members' Code of Conduct	26 January 2007	An informal meeting to be held before the introduction of the code.
Advice to Elected Members re activities during the purdah period	26 January 2007	Completed
Ethical Governance Audit	26 January 2007	To be considered at the meeting of 20 July.
Presentation on new Committee Management System	June 2007	Completed
Annual Report	23 March 2007	At the meeting of 14 March 2008.
Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life	TBA	Completed.

Parish Councils – Good Practice at Meetings	May 2007	To be put on hold depending upon the complaints that come in. Remove from workplan.
Review of the Complaints Procedure	June 2007	Completed
Employee Code of Conduct – Member/Officer training.	2006/07	To be considered at the September meeting.
Applications to the Standards Committee for a Dispensation by Members of Bishopthorpe Parish Council	June 2007	Deferred to <b>28 September 2007</b>
Member Officer Relations Protocol	28 September 2007	
Preparation for Local Determination	November	
<b><u>Programme of New Work</u></b>	<b><u>Meeting Date</u></b>	<b><u>Communication / Strategic Activity</u></b>
Full Ethical Audi	2006/07	Yes As per earlier item.
Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) – contribution of Standards Committee	The November 2007 meeting at the latest	
Assessment of the impact of the White Paper on Standards Committee	28 September 2007	
Action Plan on the Ethical Governance Audit Report.	28 September 2007	
News and Jobs feature on subsidiary to Standards Board for England (to be done when Ethical Audit results are out)	2007	