

Time Commenced – 10.00am
Time Finished – 11.15am

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE
21 JANUARY 2008**

Present: Reverend Canon R B Blowers – Chair
Mrs C McDowall, Mr P Sunderland
Councillors Jackson, Skelton and Wood

Officers in Attendance: Michael Foote - Corporate Director, Corporate and Adult Services, Steve Dunning – Assistant Director – Democratic Services and Andrew Thomas – Principal Solicitor - Legal

36/07 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

37/07 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

38/07 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

39/07 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2007 were confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.

40/07 Review of Cases

Michael Foote, Corporate Director, Corporate and Adult Services, provided an update to the Committee on a recent case involving Councillor Harbon. Councillor Harbon's suspension ended on 15 January 2008. The Committee was asked to consider whether Councillor Harbon's email and network access should be restored.

Resolved to recommend that Councillor Harbon's email and network access be restored with new login details.

41/07 Local Assessment

The Committee considered a report from the Corporate Director, Corporate and Adult Services detailing proposed responses to a consultation paper entitled

'Orders and Regulations Relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England' and a Standards board checklist for Local Authorities.

The Committee considered the proposed responses to the consultation making some amendments to the responses.

The Committee worked through the checklist for Local Authorities:

- 1) Size of standards Committee
The Committee agreed that the Committee size and make-up should stay the same. However, this should be kept under review and if there is a high volume of cases the size of the Committee may need to increase. There was a possibility of sharing independent members with Nottingham and Leicester.
- 2) Structure of standards committees
The Committee agreed that there should be a Sub-Committee A to receive and assess complaints, a Sub-Committee B to review local assessment decisions and the full Committee to conduct hearings following investigation. Members felt that the elected member in Sub-Committee A should not be from the same political group as the Councillor being complained about.
- 3) Training
IT was agreed that a training session would be arranged before the regime came into effect.
- 4) Local Assessment and the Corporate Complaints Process
The Committee was advised that the Council would be producing a form and guidance that would be integrated with the Corporate Complaints process.

Resolved

- 1. To approve the proposed responses to the Government consultation questions, set out in Appendix 2 of the report, with amendment.**
- 2. To note the response to the Standards Board checklist at appendix 4 of the report.**
- 3. To ask the Corporate Director, Corporate and Adult Services to contact Nottingham and Leicester City Councils to discuss the possibility of sharing independent members.**

42/07 Dates of Future Meetings

The Committee noted the following dates for future meetings, all meetings to commence at 10.00am.

Monday 14 April 2008

Monday 14 July 2008

Monday 27 October 2008

MINUTES END