

# STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 11 February 2009, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00pm.

## **PRESENT:**

Councillors: Mrs Knight and Mrs Tyrrell.

Independent Representatives: The Venerable M Paget-Wilkes (Chair); Mr C Purser, Miss J Ratcliffe and Mr P Willers.

Parish and Town Council Representatives: Councillors; Mrs Gordon, Polgreen, Singh and Smart.

ALSO PRESENT: Independent Representative substitute Mr C Bennett.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gifford, Guest, Heath and McFarland.

## **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2008 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## **3. CORPORATE COMPLAINT 953**

The Committee received a verbal report from the Senior Committee Services Officer on behalf of the Executive regarding the concerns raised by this Committee about Corporate Complaint 953.

At its meeting 1 December 2008 the Standards Committee received its half yearly report on the outcomes of complaints about this authority. It had particular concern about corporate complaint 953, investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman as 08 004 397.

The Standards Committee's concerns related to the length of time taken to resolve the matter in general.

A summary of the complaint, the outcomes and the concerns of the Standards Committee were reported to the Executive on 4 February 2009. The Executive had noted the compensation awarded and were satisfied with the actions taken by the Private Sector Housing Team to ensure that this was not repeated.

The Committee noted the response from the Executive but wished to record that they still had concerns about how this matter went undetected and hoped that action had been taken to ensure that this problem could not be repeated.

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES(Continued)**

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

### **4. WORK PLAN**

The Committee considered a report from Members' Services that set out their agreed work plan for the remainder of the municipal year and a suggested plan for the next municipal year.

The report sought the opinion of the Committee on training for themselves in relation to Code of Conduct and governance matters along with training for Warwick District Councillors and Parish/Town Councils within the District on Code of Conduct matters.

The report also raised a number of issues with regard to meeting dates for the next municipal year for the Committee to discuss.

The Committee felt that they had had sufficient training on Code of Conduct matters but felt that, a briefing on governance before the meeting in June to review the Councils Governance would be useful.

The Committee discussed the best way of ensuring Parish and Town Councils were aware of the importance of the Code of Conduct and the process that would be used for investigating alleged breaches of it. The Committee felt that the procedure this Committee would follow in assessing complaints should be explained and to ask if they required any further training.

**RESOLVED** that the following amendments be made to the work plan of the Committee:

- (1) the possible training session on 7 April be deleted;
- (2) the meeting on 27 May 2009 be moved to 19 May 2009;
- (3) a briefing on the Council's Governance Policy and Annual Governance Statement be added to the agenda on 19 May;
- (4) the meeting to consider the Council's Governance Statement be held on 15 June 2009 and this should include the Annual Assessment of complaints about this authority;
- (5) the meeting on 28 July 2009 be cancelled; and
- (6) the meeting on 4 November be moved to 11 November.

(The meeting ended at 6.30pm)