

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

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Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held on Tuesday 9 November 2010 at City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 1400
Concluded 1505

PRESENT –

Independent Persons

The Very Revd Dr D J Ison, Mr G Dobson, Mrs A Mullen and Mr M Shakeel

Parish and Town Council Members

Parish Councillors Bowen and Thompson

Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Owens	Ferriby	G Reid
D Smith	Lee	

The Very Revd Dr Ison in the Chair

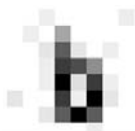
26. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

27. MINUTES

Resolved -

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2010 be signed as a correct record.



Suzan Hemingway, Assistant Director Corporate Services (City Solicitor)

28. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

29. MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT ON COMPLAINTS

The Monitoring Officer reported to the meeting the receipt of complaints notified to her, the stage that notified complaints had reached and the final outcome on the consideration of a complaint, where appropriate.

She advised that, in two of the current cases, the subject Member had ceased to hold office at some point in each assessment/investigation process. She also advised that, in each case, she was currently trying to obtain the view of the complainants. If they were not interested in maintaining their complaints, she intended to discontinue the process.

Members discussed the principle of how to proceed in such a case and, in particular, considered how to proceed if the individual being complained of wished to have the process continued in order to clear their name, even though they no longer held office.

Members agreed that, in cases where a former Member held strong views on continuing the process, that should be taken into account alongside the views of the complainant before any decision was made about discontinuance.

Resolved –

That, in cases where a Member ceases to be a Member during the period covered by assessment/investigation, the views of the complainant and the subject member be sought before the assessment/investigation is discontinued.

ACTION: Assistant Director Corporate Services (City Solicitor)

30. PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS ON GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

The Assistant Director Corporate Services presented a report (**Document "E"**), in which Members were invited to consider proposed amendments to the Protocol for Members on Gifts and Hospitality and the circulation of the amended document to all Members of Council.

She advised the Committee that it was important to record gifts and hospitality to protect against criticism or allegations of inappropriate behaviour. She reiterated the advice given in the letter attached to Document "E" that the requirement to disclose an interest at meetings remained a responsibility even if a gift had been entered into the register. At the request of the Chair she undertook to expand the letter to explain that point a little more clearly.

In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director confirmed that even when gifts had been given to a Member on behalf of a charity, it was helpful to have an audit trail to protect a Member's good name.

The Committee suggested the following amendments to the protocol, in order to make it clearer and easier for Members to use:

- Amend the second paragraph of point 9.1 to become a separate point numbered 9.2 and delete the current point 9.2.
- Amend points 10.1 and 10.2 to make them into a single point.
- Amend points 3.1 and 3.2 to make them into a single point.

The Assistant Director undertook to incorporate those amendments into the protocol under her delegated authority and to circulate the amended protocol and letter to all Members.

ACTION: *Assistant Director Corporate Services (City Solicitor)*

31. **STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

An updated copy of the Committee's work programme was appended to the agenda for Members' information.

The Chair noted that the proposals for the future of the Standards Regime would be available at the end of November and led the Committee in a discussion about how best to respond to that, given the meetings already scheduled.

It was agreed to keep the schedule of meetings as already established but to adjust the workload to deal with any announcements made.

ACTION: *Assistant Director Corporate Services (City Solicitor)*

32. **ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR ENGLAND DECISIONS**

Members were invited to consider summaries of recent decisions made by the Adjudication Panel for England regarding allegations of misconduct against members which were set out in **Document "F"**.

The Assistant Director noted that the two cases contained in the report had been chosen as they raised interesting points about:-

- robust challenge and the level of the test set to ensure that such challenge was legitimate
- official capacity versus private life
- bullying

NO ACTION

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Committee.

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THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER