

# City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

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## Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held on Thursday 2 June 2011 at City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 1400  
Concluded 1525

### PRESENT –

#### Independent Persons

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

#### Parish and Town Council Members

Parish Councillors Bowen and Mitchell

#### Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Kelly	Lee	G Reid
D Smith	A Thornton	

Apologies: Councillors Binney and Ferriby and Parish Councillor Thompson

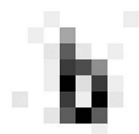
### The Very Revd Dr Ison in the Chair

#### 1. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

#### 2. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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



Suzan Hemingway, City Solicitor

### 3. **APPOINTMENT OF HEARINGS PANELS**

The Committee was advised that the Constitution required it to appoint the following Sub-Committees:-

- i) Assessment Sub-Committee
- ii) Review Sub-Committee
- iii) Consideration Sub-Committee
- iv) Determination Sub-Committee

The Panels would be required to hear and determine allegations of breach of the relevant code(s) of conduct by Members of Council and of Parish and Town Councils respectively.

**Resolved –**

**That the Assessment, Review, Consideration and Determination Sub-Committees be appointed with memberships and role and functions as contained in the Constitution and subject to the Rules of Procedure contained in Part 3 of the Constitution adopted by Annual Council on 24 May 2011.**

**ACTION: City Solicitor**

### 4. **MEMBERS' REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

Previous reference: Minute 49 (2010/11)

Members were reminded that following discussions on the Members' Register of Interest form at the meeting on 17 May 2011 it had been agreed that the issue be the subject of further discussion at the next meeting.

In order to assist the discussion, the Monitoring Officer presented the following documentation:-

- blank register of interest form
- notes for completion of registration form
- draft register of interest form, provided by Cllr D Smith
- Kirklees register of interest form
- Wakefield register of interest form
- Leeds register of interest form
- draft amended register of interest form

The Chair thanked Councillor Smith for providing his draft completed form along with his comments on the completion process and suggested that the Committee should concentrate its discussion on that document, along with the draft amended form, which incorporated the guidance notes alongside each question, instead of in a separate document.

The Committee considered each section of the draft amended form in turn, making the following points:-

### Section 1 – Any Employment or Business carried on by You

The issue of whether to include voluntary or unpaid work was discussed as it was considered that such occupation may constitute an interest that the general public would think should be disclosed.

As it was likely to apply in very specific circumstances only, Members considered that the form as a whole should be given the strapline "if you are unsure, please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer" rather than overcomplicating this section.

### Section 2 – The Name of the Person who Employs or has Appointed You, the Name of Any Firm in which you are a Partner and the Name of Any Company for which you are a Remunerated Director

The use of the word "remunerated" was discussed and it was agreed that it should be underlined to emphasise its importance.

It was also agreed that, throughout the document, the use of bold type should be removed, key words should be highlighted and bullet points should be used to simplify complex points.

### Section 3 – The Name of Any Person other than the Council who has Made a Payment to You in Respect of Your Election, or any Expenses incurred by You in Carrying Out Your Duties

It was agreed that this question would be much clarified if it were asked as two separate questions, with the second part being placed after the present Section 10.

### Section 4 – The Name of Any Corporate Body which has a Place of Business or Land within the Council's Area and in which You Have a Beneficial Interest in a Class of Securities of that Body that exceeds the Nominal Value of £25,000 or One Hundredth of the Total issued share capital of that Body

It was considered that the explanatory note should read "if this is less than £25,000 but your holding is more than 1% of the total issued share capital....." rather than ".....the holding....."

### Section 5 – A Description of Any Contract for Goods, Services or Works made between the Council and Yourself or a firm in which You are a Partner, A Company of which You are a Remunerated Director or a Body of the Description specified in Box 4 above

It was agreed that the explanatory notes should make it clear that "contract" applied to a written contract and not to an irregular or one-off payment for small purchases.

It was also noted that the question should be reconfigured using bullet points to clarify it.

The Monitoring Officer also undertook to examine whether the issue should also cover Members who were involved with organisations in other capacities, such as trusteeships, and at what level of involvement they could reasonably be expected to be aware of contractual arrangements.

### Section 6 – The Address or Other Description (sufficient to Identify the Location) of Any Land in which You Have a Beneficial Interest and which is within the Council's Area

All Members agreed this section was suitable in its present form.

Section 7 – The Address or Other Description (sufficient to Identify the Location) of Any Land where the Landlord is the Council and the Tenant is a firm in which You Are a Partner, a company of which You Are a Remunerated Director, or a Body of a Description specified in Box 4, Above

Again, Members considered that the word "remunerated" should be highlighted.

Section 8 – The Address or Other Description (sufficient to Identify the Location) of Any Land in the Council's Area in which You have a Licence (Alone or with others) to Occupy for 28 Days or longer

It was agreed that this section should be rewritten into two parts, to clarify the issue of remuneration.

It should also clarify whether the Member concerned was in a position of management or control.

Section 9 – Any Membership of or Position of General Control or Management in Any Body to which You have Been Appointed by the Council as its Representative

It was considered that it should be possible for this section to be pre-populated on Members' behalf.

It was also considered that it should be clarified that this section referred only to bodies that a Member had been appointed to by the Council. Any other appointment, including subsequent appointments by the body referred to here, should be listed in Section 11.

Section 10 – Any Membership of or Position of General Control or Management in Any Public Authority or Body Exercising Functions of a Public Nature

Further to the discussion on Section 9, it was considered that this section should be clarified to show that it meant membership in a personal capacity rather than as a representative of the Council.

It was also considered that this Section should include Parish Council membership.

Section 11 – Any Membership of or Position of General Control or Management in any Company, Industrial and Provident Society, Charity or Body Directed to Charitable Purposes

It was agreed that the wording used on the register of interests form at Wakefield was clearer and should be adopted.

Section 12 – Any Membership of or Position of General Control or Management in Any Body whose Principal Purposes include the influence of Public Opinion or Policy

All Members agreed this section was suitable in its present form.

Section 13.1 – Any Membership of or Position of General Control or Management in Any Trade Union or Professional Association

Section 13.2 – Any Membership of or Position of General Control or Management in Any Private Club or Organisation

It was agreed that this section would be much clearer if it was split into two separate sections, as the use of sub-headings was confusing.

**Resolved –**

**That the Monitoring Officer produce a revised register of interests form, incorporating the amendments suggested by the Committee, for discussion at the next meeting.**

**ACTION: City Solicitor**

**5. STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

A copy of the Committee's draft work programme was provided at the meeting for Members' information and discussion.

A Member asked whether consultation would be undertaken with Parish Councils in respect of the item headed 'Engaging with Parish Councils'.

The Monitoring Officer advised that she had already consulted with the Parish Council Liaison Committee and that, in her view the National Code of Conduct did not fully provide the necessary level of support to Parish Councils and their staff. She considered that, in future, a separate Code would be necessary.

The Chair queried the stage that discussions had reached within the Council leadership on the Localism Bill and was advised that the Group Leaders were in the process of being briefed and that further consideration of the matter would be necessary in order to move on in tandem with the progress of the Bill.

**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