

Minutes of Standards Committee

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 3 February 2010 starting at 6.30pm
Present: B Dearing (Chairman)

Councillors:

L Rimmer
M Robinson
D Taylor

Parish Councillors:

E Law-Riding

Independent Members:

G Wilkinson

In attendance: Legal Services Manager

Also in attendance:

781 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor D Smith, Parish Councillors M Birch, C Law and D Moon and Independent Members R Bennett and P Walsh.

782 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

783 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

784 REFERENCES FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no references from Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEES – RESEARCH BY STANDARDS FOR ENGLAND

The Legal Services Manager submitted a report informing Committee of research that had been carried out to assess the impact of Standards Committee. A research paper had been published on behalf of Standards for England which sought to summarise the impact of Standards Committees and to provide examples of notable or best practice in the work of the Standards Committees. The report highlighted brief details of each of the case studies for Committee to consider whether this Committee wanted to explore similar opportunities. These included organisational learning, working with town and parish councils, developing members police authority, working with partnerships, recruitment and retention, joint training and developments, Joint Standards and Audit Committee, high pressure investigations and embedding standards.

The Committee discussed various of these issues and felt that for the most part the Borough Council already deals effectively with these issues. However, it was felt that the possibility of a Joint Standards and Audit Committee might be considered and that it would prove useful under Working with Partnerships for members of the Standards Committee to be more aware of each others wealth of experience. It was also felt that the ongoing work of the Standards Committee should be publicised.

RESOLVED: That

1. Committee ask the Corporate Communications Officer to include an article on the Standards Committee in the next edition of Ribble Valley News; and
2. that members of this Committee be asked to make short presentations about themselves at a future meeting.

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EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business be an Exempt Information Under Category 7 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

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REFERENCES FROM OUTSIDE BODIES – DATA BASE UPDATE

The Legal Services Manager submitted a report outlining the representatives on Outside Bodies of the Borough Council which now also included whether the member representative felt they had received adequate initial information, understood their role on the Outside Body, understood the indemnity arrangements, whether the Outside Body contributed to the Council's priorities, the approximate length of time per month spent and whether the Outside Body has a code of conduct.

There were several members of Outside Bodies that had not yet responded to this questionnaire. It was also felt that the addition of the status of an organisation with regard to its constitution should be added to the information.

RESOLVED: That

1. the updated data base be noted; and
2. the Legal Services Manager be requested to add an additional column regarding the status of the organisation and ensure the non responding members on outside bodies be followed up.

788 TRAINING SESSION – DVD PRODUCED BY STANDARDS FOR ENGLAND
“ASSESSMENT MADE CLEAR”

Members of the Standards Committee had a short training session with regard to assessment of complaints utilising the DVD produced by the Standards for England.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Diane Rice (414418).